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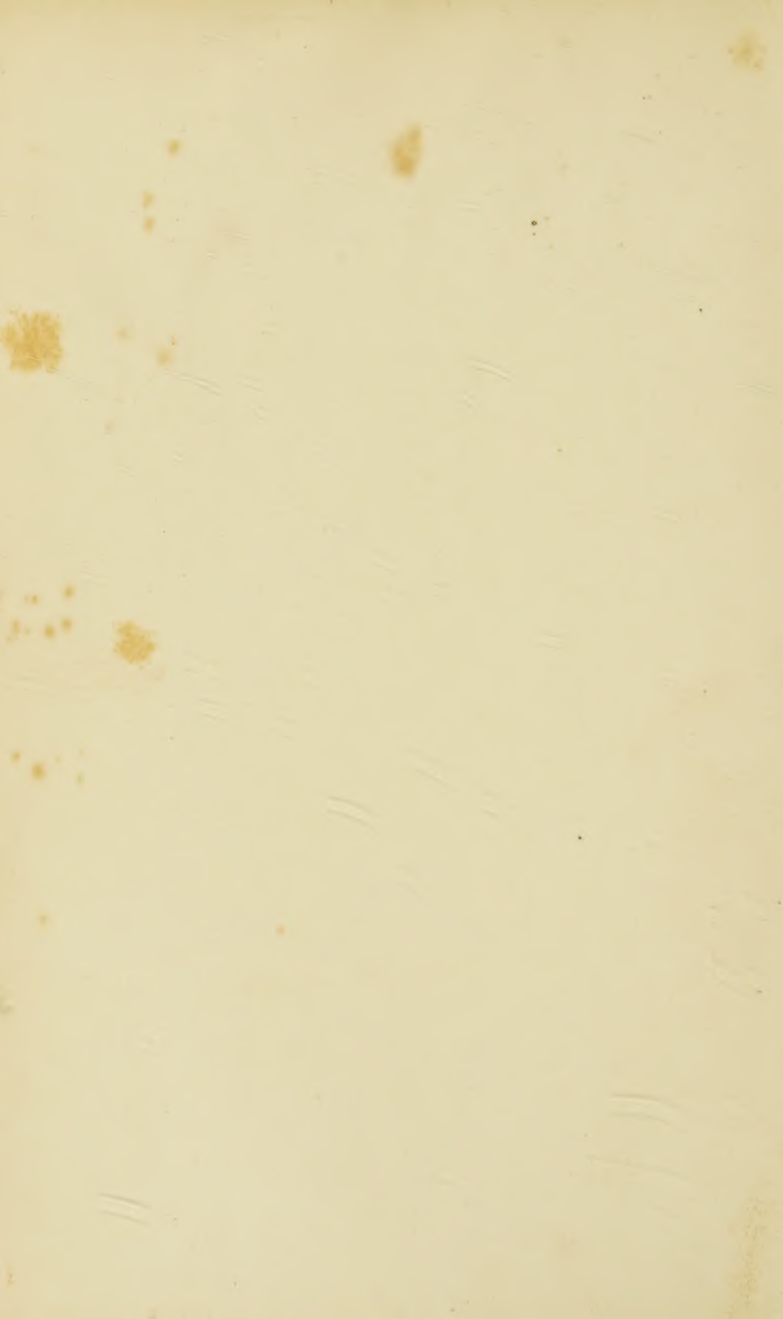
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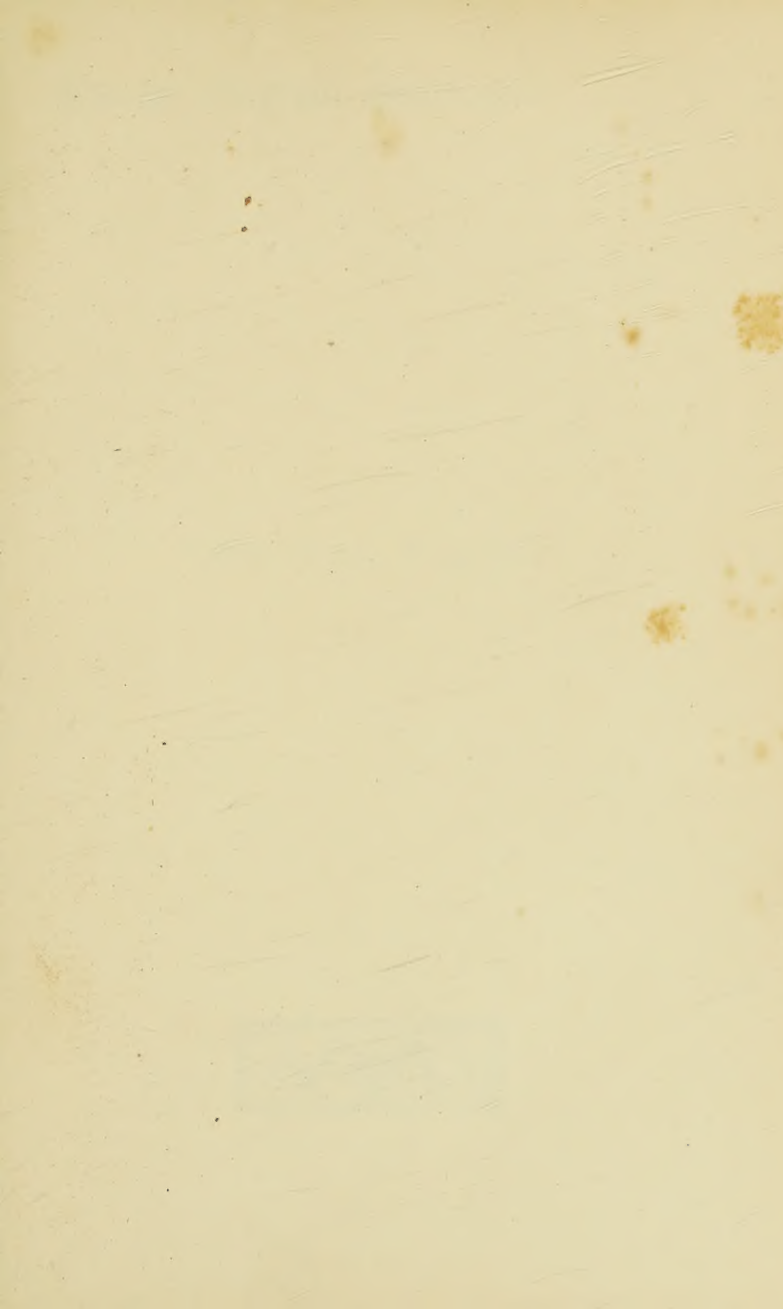
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Twelve English Statesmen

CARDINAL WOLSEY



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CARDINAL WOLSEY

BY

MANDELL CREIGHTON

BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH

M.A. OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE, D.C.L. OF DURHAM

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CHAPTER I

THE STATE OF EUROPE

1494—1512

ALL men are to be judged by what they do, and the way in which they do it. In the case of great statesmen there is a third consideration which challenges our judgment—what they choose to do. This consideration only presents itself in the case of great statesmen, and even then is not always recognised. For the average statesman does from day to day the business which has to be done, takes affairs as he finds them, and makes the best of them. Many who deliberately selected the questions with which they dealt have yet shrunk from the responsibility of their choice, and have preferred to represent their actions as inevitable. Few can claim the credit of choosing the sphere of their activity, of framing a connected policy with clear and definite ends, and of applying their ideas to every department of national organisation. In short, statesmen are generally opportunists, or choose to represent themselves as such; and this has been especially the case with English statesmen—amongst whom Wolsey stands out as a notable exception. For Wolsey claims recognition on grounds which apply to

himself alone. His name is not associated with any great achievement, he worked out no great measure of reform, nor did he contribute any great political idea which was fruitful in after days. He was, above all things, a practical man, though he pursued a line of policy which few understood, and which he did not stop to make intelligible. No very definite results came of it immediately, and the results which came of it afterwards were not such as Wolsey had designed. Yet, if we consider his actual achievements, we are bound to admit that he was probably the greatest political genius whom England has ever produced ; for at a great crisis of European history he impressed England with a sense of her own importance, and secured for her a leading position in European affairs, which since his days has seemed her natural right.

Thus Wolsey is to be estimated by what he chose to do rather than by what he did. He was greater than his achievements. Yet Wolsey's greatness did not rise beyond the conditions of his own age, and he left no legacy of great thought or high endeavour. The age in which he lived was not one of lofty aspirations or noble aims ; but it was one of large designs and restless energy. No designs were cast in so large a mould as were those of Wolsey ; no statesman showed such skill as he did in weaving patiently the web of diplomatic intrigue. His resources were small, and he husbanded them with care. He had a master who only dimly understood his objects, and whose personal whims and caprices had always to be conciliated. He was ill supplied with agents. His schemes often failed in detail ; but he was always ready to gather together the broken threads and resume his

work without repining. In a time of universal restlessness and excitement Wolsey was the most plodding, the most laborious, and the most versatile of those who laboured at statecraft.

The field of action which Wolsey deliberately chose was that of foreign policy, and his weapons were diplomacy. The Englishmen of his time were like the Englishmen of to-day, and had little sympathy with his objects. Those who reaped the benefits of his policy gave him no thanks for it, nor did they recognise what they owed to him. Those who exulted in the course taken by the English Reformation regarded Wolsey as its bitterest foe, and never stopped to think that Wolsey trained the hands and brains which directed it; that Wolsey inspired England with the proud feeling of independence which nerved her to brave the public opinion of Europe; that Wolsey impressed Europe with such a sense of England's greatness that she was allowed to go her own way, menaced but unassailed. The spirit which animated the England of the sixteenth century was due in no small degree to the splendour of Wolsey's successes, and to the way in which he stamped upon men's imagination a belief in England's greatness. If it is the characteristic of a patriot to believe that nothing is beyond the power of his country to achieve, then Wolsey was the most devoted patriot whom England ever produced.

When Wolsey came to power England was an upstart trying to claim for herself a decent position in the august society of European states. It was Wolsey's cleverness that set her in a place far above that which she had any right to expect. For this purpose Wolsey

schemed and intrigued ; when one plan failed he was always ready with another. It mattered little what was the immediate object which he had in hand ; it mattered much that in pursuing it he should so act as to increase the credit of England, and create a belief in England's power. Diplomacy can reckon few abler practitioners than was Wolsey.

There is little that is directly ennobling in the contemplation of such a career. It may be doubted if the career of any practical statesman can be a really ennobling study if we have all its activity recorded in detail. At the best it tells us of much which seems disingenuous if not dishonest—much in which nobility of aim or the complexity of affairs has to be urged in extenuation of shifty words and ambiguous actions.

The age in which Wolsey lived was immoral in the sense in which all periods are immoral, when the old landmarks are disappearing and there is no certainty about the future. Morality in individuals and in states alike requires an orderly life, a perception of limits, a pursuit of definite ends. When order is shattered, when limits are removed, when all things seem possible, then political morality disappears. In such a condition was Europe at the beginning of the sixteenth century. The old ideas, on which the mediæval conception of Christendom depended, were passing away. No one any longer regarded Christendom as one great commonwealth, presided over by Pope and Emperor, who were the guardians of international law and arbiters of international relations. The Empire had long ceased to exercise any control, because it was destitute of strength. The Papacy, after vainly endeavouring to unite Europe round

the old cry of a crusade against the Turk, had discovered that there was no European power on which it could rely for support. The old ideas were gone, the old tribunals were powerless, the old bonds of European union were dissolved.

The first result of this decay in the mediæval state-system of Europe was the emergence of vague plans of a universal monarchy. The Empire and the Papacy had harmonised with the feudal conception of a regulative supremacy over vassals who were free to act within the limits of their obligations to their superior lord. When the old superiors were no longer recognised, the idea of a supremacy still remained ; but there was no other basis possible for that supremacy than a basis of universal sovereignty. It was long before any state was sufficiently powerful to venture on such a claim ; but the end of the fifteenth century saw France and Spain united into powerful kingdoms. In France, the policy of Louis XI. succeeded in reducing the great feudatories, and established the power of the monarchy as the bond of union between provinces which were conscious of like interests. In Spain, the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella united a warlike people who swept away the remains of the Moorish kingdom. Germany, though nominally it recognised one ruler, had sacrificed its national kingship to the futile claims of the Empire. The emperor had great pretensions, but was himself powerless, and the German princes steadily refused to lend him help to give reality to his high-sounding claims. Unconsciously to themselves, the rulers of France and Spain were preparing to attempt the extension of their power over the rest of Europe.

France under Charles VIII. was the first to give expression to this new idea of European politics. The Italian expedition of Charles VIII. marked the end of the Middle Ages, because it put forth a scheme of national aggrandisement which was foreign to mediæval conceptions. The scheme sounded fantastic, and was still cast in the mould of mediæval aspirations. The kingdom of Naples had long been in dispute between the houses of Arragon and Anjou. As heir to the Angevin line, Charles VIII. proposed to satisfy national pride by the conquest of Naples. Then he appealed to the old sentiment of Christendom by proclaiming his design of advancing against Constantinople, expelling the Turk from Europe, and realising the ideal of mediæval Christianity by planting once more the standard of the Cross upon the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem.

The first part of his plan succeeded with a rapidity and ease that bewildered the rest of Europe. The French conquest of Naples awakened men to the danger which threatened them. France, as ruler of Naples, could overrun the rest of Italy, and as master of the Pope could use the authority of the head of Christendom to give legitimacy to further schemes of aggression. A sense of common danger drew the other powers of Europe together; and a League of Spain, the Empire, the Pope, Milan, and Venice forced Charles VIII. to retire from Naples (1495), where the French conquests were rapidly lost. A threat of his return next year led to an emphatic renewal of the League and an assertion of the basis on which it rested—"the mutual preservation of states, so that the more powerful might not

oppress the less powerful, and that each should keep what rightly belongs to him."

This League marks a new departure in European affairs. There was no mention of the old ideas on which Europe was supposed to rest. There was no recognition of papal or imperial supremacy; no principle of European organisation was laid down. The existing state of things was to be maintained, and the contracting powers were to decide amongst themselves what rights and claims they thought fit to recognise. Such a plan might be useful to check French preponderance at the moment, but it was fatal to the free development of Europe. The states that were then powerful might grow in power; those that were not yet strong were sure to be prevented from growing stronger. Dynastic interests were set up as against national interests. European affairs were to be settled by combinations of powerful states.

The results of this system were rapidly seen. France, of course, was checked for the time; but France, in its turn, could enter the League and become a factor in European combinations. The problem now for statesmen was how to use this concert of Europe for their own interests. Dynastic considerations were the most obvious means of gaining powerful alliances. Royal marriages became matters of the greatest importance, because a lucky union of royal houses might secure a lasting preponderance. The Emperor Maximilian married his son Philip to a daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella. Death removed the nearer heirs to the Spanish rulers, and the son of Philip was heir to Austria, the Netherlands, and the Spanish kingdoms. The notion of a maintenance

of European equilibrium faded away before such a prospect.

This prospect, however, was only in the future. For the present there was an opportunity for endless scheming. The European League for the preservation of the existing state of things resisted any expansion on the part of smaller states, but encouraged compacts for aggression amongst the more powerful. France, Spain, and Germany had each of them a national existence, while Italy consisted of a number of small states. If Italy was to survive it was necessary that she should follow the example of her powerful neighbours, and consolidate herself as they had done. The only state which was at that time likely to unite Italy was Venice; and Venice, in consequence, became the object of universal jealousy. The concert of Europe was applied to the Venetian question, and discovered a solution of the simplest sort. Instead of allowing Venice to unite Italy, it was judged better to divide Venice. A secret agreement was made between Spain, France, the Emperor, and the Pope that they would attack Venice simultaneously, deprive her of her possessions, and divide them amongst themselves. There was no lack of claims and titles to the possessions which were thus to be acquired. The powers of Europe, being judges in their own cause, could easily state their respective pleas and pronounce each other justified. The League of Cambrai, which was published at the end of 1508, was the first great production of the new system of administering public law in Europe.

Anything more iniquitous could scarcely be conceived. Venice deserved well at the hands of Europe. She had developed a great system of commerce with the East;

she was the chief bulwark against the advance of the Turkish power; she was the one refuge of Italian independence. Those very reasons marked her out for pillage by the powers who, claiming to act in the interests of Europe, interpreted these interests according to their own selfishness. Each power hoped to appropriate some of the profits of Venetian commerce; each power wished for a slice of the domains of Italy. What the Turk did was a matter of little consequence; he was not the object of immediate dread.

This League of Cambrai witnessed the assimilation by the new system of the relics of the old. Imperial and papal claims were set in the foreground. Venice was excommunicated by the Pope, because she had the audacity to refuse to give up to him at once his share of the booty. The iniquities of the European concert were flimsily concealed by the rags of the old system of the public law of Europe, which only meant that the Pope and the Emperor were foremost in joining in the general scramble. France was first in the field against Venice, and consequently France was the chief gainer. Pope Julius II., having won from Venice all that he could claim, looked with alarm on the increase of the French power in Italy. As soon as he had satisfied himself, and had reduced Venice to abject submission, his one desire was to rid himself of his troublesome allies. The papal authority in itself could no longer influence European politics; but it could give a sanction to new combinations which interested motives might bring about. With cynical frankness the Papacy, powerless in its own resources, used its privileged position to further its temporal objects. We cannot wonder that Louis XII.

of France tried to create a schism, and promoted the holding of a general council. We are scarcely surprised that the fantastic brain of the Emperor Maximilian formed a scheme of becoming the Pope's coadjutor, and finally annexing the papal to the imperial dignity. On every side the old landmarks of Europe were disappearing, and the future was seen to belong to the strong hand and the adventurous wit.

During the reign of Henry VII. England had stood aloof from these complicated intrigues. Indeed England could not hope to make her voice heard in the affairs of Europe. The weak government of Henry VI., and the struggles between the Yorkist and Lancastrian factions, had reduced her to political exhaustion. While France and Spain had grown into strong kingdoms, England had dwindled into a third-rate power. Henry VII. had enough to do in securing his own throne against pretenders, and in reducing the remnants of the feudal nobility to obedience. He so far worked in accordance with the prevailing spirit that he steadily increased the royal power. He fell in with the temper of the time, and formed matrimonial alliances which might bear political fruits. He gave his daughter in marriage to the King of Scotland, in the hopes of thereby bringing the Scottish Crown into closer relation with England. He sought for a connexion with Spain by marrying his eldest son Arthur to Katharine, a daughter of Ferdinand and Isabella, and on Arthur's untimely death Katharine became the wife of his next son Henry. Further, Henry VII. gave his general approval to the League of 1496; he joined it, but would promise no armed aid nor money. In short, he did enough to claim for England

a place in the new system of the European commonwealth, though he himself declined to take any active part in the activity that was consequently developed. He was old before his years, and was unequal to any additional labour. He had saved his reputation by his cautious and skilful policy at home. The statesmen of Europe respected him for what he had done already, but they did not expect him to do anything more. He had secured his dynasty, reduced his lands to order, favoured its commerce, and secured for it peace. He had lived frugally and had saved money, which was not the fortune of the more adventurous princes. England was looked upon with an eye of condescending favour by the great powers of Europe. Her population was small, about three millions and a half; her military forces had not been trained in the new methods of European warfare; her navy was not kept up on a war footing. She could not rank higher than a third-rate power.

So England stood when Henry VII. died, and was succeeded by his son Henry VIII., a youth of nineteen. We may indulge ourselves, if we choose, in speculations on the probable effects if Henry VIII. had been content to pursue his father's policy. The picture of England, peaceful and contented while the rest of Europe is engaged in wasteful and wicked war, is attractive as an ideal in English politics. England in the sixteenth century might have stood aloof from European affairs, and might have prospered in her own fashion. But one thing is certain, that she would never have become the England of to-day; the New World, and the possessions of the British Empire, would have been divided between France

and Spain ; the course of civilisation would have been widely different. For good or for evil the fortunes of England were given a decided direction by Henry VIII.'s advance into the sphere of European politics. England took up a position from which she could not afterwards retire.

It is scarcely worth while to inquire if Henry VIII. could by prudence and caution have continued to keep clear of the complications of European politics, and make England strong by husbanding its resources and developing its commerce. Such a course of action was not deemed possible by any one. All classes alike believed that national prosperity followed upon the assertion of national power. The commercial interests of England would have had little chance of being respected unless they were connected with political interests as well. If Henry VIII. had lived frugally like his father, and avoided adventurous schemes for which he needed the money of his people, the English monarchy would have become a despotism, and the royal will would have been supreme in all internal affairs. England was not exposed to this danger. Henry VIII., when he ascended the throne at the age of nineteen, was fully imbued by the spirit of his time. The story goes that when Leo X. was elected Pope he turned to his brother and said with a smile, "Let us enjoy the Papacy, since God has given it to us." Henry VIII. was resolved to enjoy his kingship to the full ; he wished to show Europe that he was every inch a king, and equal to the best.

Henry VIII. in his early days had been educated with a view to high ecclesiastical preferment, and was a

youth of many accomplishments of mind and body. His tall stalwart frame, his fair round face and profusion of light hair, his skill in athletic exercises, made the Venetian envoy pronounce him to be the handsomest and most capable king in Christendom. He inherited the geniality, the physical strength, the resoluteness of the Yorkist house, and combined them with the self-restraint and caution of the Lancastrians. No king began his reign with greater popularity, and the belief in the soundness of his head and heart filled all men with hopes of a long period of just and prosperous government. But many hoped for more than this. The reign of Henry VII. had been successful, but inglorious. The strong character and the generous impulses of the new ruler were not likely to be satisfied with the cautious intrigues and petty calculations of his father. England looked forward to a glorious and distinguished future. It believed in its king, and clung to its belief in spite of many disappointments. Not all the harsh doings of Henry VIII. exhausted the popularity with which he began his reign, and in the midst of his despotism he never lost his hold upon the people.

So Henry VIII. carried out the plan which his father had formed for him. He married Katharine, his brother's widow, and so confirmed the alliance with Ferdinand of Spain. He renewed the marriage treaty between his sister Mary and Charles, Prince of Castile, heir of the Netherlands, and eldest grandson of Ferdinand and Maximilian alike. Charles was only a boy of nine, and had great prospects of a large heritage. England was likely, if this arrangement were carried out, to be a useful but humble ally to the projects of the houses

of Hapsburg and Spain, useful because of its position, which commanded the Channel, and could secure communications between the Netherlands and Spain, humble because it had little military reputation or capacity for diplomacy.

The alliance, however, between Ferdinand and Maximilian was by no means close. Ferdinand by his marriage with Isabella had united the kingdoms of Castile and Arragon; but after Isabella's death he had no claim to the Crown of Castile, which passed to his daughter Juana. Already Juana's husband, the Archduke Philip, had claimed the regency of Castile, and Ferdinand was only saved by Philip's death from the peril of seeing much of his work undone. The claim to Castile had now passed to the young Charles, and Ferdinand was afraid lest Maximilian should at any time revive it in behalf of his grandson. He was unwilling to help in any way to increase Maximilian's power, and rejoiced that in the results of the League of Cambrai little profit fell to Maximilian's share. The Pope gained all that he wished; Ferdinand acquired without a blow the Venetian possessions in the Neapolitan kingdom; the French arms were triumphant in North Italy; but Venice continued to offer a stubborn resistance to Maximilian. In vain Maximilian implored Ferdinand's help. He was unmoved till the successes of the French awakened in his mind serious alarm. The authors of the League of Cambrai began to be afraid of the catastrophe which they had caused. They did not wish to see the French supreme in Italy, but their combination had gone far to ensure the French supremacy.

Pope Julius II. felt himself most directly threatened by the growth of the French power. He resolved to break up the League of Cambrai, and so undo his own work. He tried to gain support from the Swiss and from England. He released Venice from her excommunication, and showed himself steadfastly opposed to France. He did his utmost to induce Ferdinand and Maximilian to renounce the League. Ferdinand was cautious, and only gave his secret countenance to the Pope's designs. Maximilian, anxious to make good his claims against Venice, wavered between an alliance with France and a rupture. Louis XII. of France was embarrassed by the hostility of the Pope, whom he tried to terrify into submission. His troops advanced against Bologna, where Julius II. was residing. The Pope fled, but the French forces did not pursue him. Louis was not prepared to treat the Pope as merely a temporal sovereign, and Rome was spared a siege. But Louis was so ill-judging as to attack the Pope on his spiritual side. He raised the old cry of a General Council for the reform of the Church, and drew to his side a few disaffected cardinals, who summoned a Council to assemble at Pisa.

This half-hearted procedure was fatal to all hopes of French supremacy. Had Louis XII. promptly dealt with Julius II. by force of arms he would have rendered the Pope powerless to interfere with his political plans, and no one would have interposed to help the Pope in his capacity of an Italian prince. But when the French king showed that he was afraid of the papal dignity in temporal matters, while he was ready to attack it in spiritual matters, he entered upon a course

of action which was dangerous to Europe. Ferdinand was waiting for a good pretext to free himself from further share in the policy of the League of Cambrai, and Louis provided him with the pretext which he sought. Shocked at the danger of a new schism, Ferdinand, in October 1511, entered into a League with the Pope and Venice, a League which took the high-sounding title of the Holy League, since it was formed for the protection of the Papacy.

Of this Holy League Henry VIII. became a member in December, and so stepped boldly into the politics of Europe. He was at first a submissive son of King Ferdinand, whose daughter, Queen Katharine, acted as Spanish ambassador at the English Court. Henry wished to make common cause with his father-in-law, and trusted implicitly to him for assurances of goodwill. He made a separate accord with Ferdinand that a combined army should invade Guienne. If the French were defeated Ferdinand would be able to conquer Navarre, and England would seize Guienne. The gain to England would be great, as Guienne would be a secure refuge for English commerce, and its possession would make the English king an important personage in Europe, for he would stand between Spain and France.

The scheme was not fantastic or impossible, provided that Ferdinand was in earnest. Henry believed in his good faith, but he still had the confidence of youth. Ferdinand trusted no one, and if others were like himself he was wise in his distrust. Every year he grew more suspicious and fonder of crooked ways. He took no man's counsel; he made fair professions on every

side ; his only object was to secure himself at the least cost. His confiding son-in-law was soon to discover that Ferdinand only meant to use English gold as a means for furthering his own designs against France ; he did not intend that England should have any share in the advantage.

Unconscious of the selfishness of his ally, Henry VIII. prepared for war in the winter of 1512. In these preparations the capacity of Thomas Wolsey first made itself felt, and the course of the war that followed placed Wolsey foremost in the confidence of the English king.

CHAPTER II

THE FRENCH ALLIANCE

1512-1515

THOMAS WOLSEY was born at Ipswich, probably in March 1471. He was the son of Robert Wolsey and Joan his wife. Contemporary slander, wishing to make his fortunes more remarkable or his presumption more intolerable, represented his father as a man of mean estate, a butcher by trade. However, Robert Wolsey's will shows that he was a man of good position, probably a grazier and wool merchant, with relatives who were also well to do. Thomas seems to have been the eldest of his family, and his father's desire was that he should enter the priesthood. He showed quickness in study; so much so that he went to Oxford at the early age of eleven, and became Bachelor of Arts when he was fifteen. His studies do not seem to have led him in the direction of the new learning; he was well versed in the theology of the schools, and is said to have been a devoted adherent to the system of St. Thomas Aquinas. But it was not by the life of a student or the principles of a philosopher that Wolsey rose to eminence. If he learned anything in his University

career he learned a knowledge of men and of their motives.

In due course he became a Fellow of Magdalen, and master of the grammar school attached to the College. Soon afterwards, in 1498, he was bursar; and tradition has connected with him the building of the graceful tower which is one of the chief architectural ornaments of Oxford. Unfortunately the tower was finished in the year in which Wolsey became bursar, and all that he can have done was the prosaic duty of paying the bills for its erection. He continued his work of schoolmaster till in 1500 the Marquis of Dorset, whose sons Wolsey had taught, gave him the living of Lymington in Somerset.

So Wolsey abandoned academic life for the quietness of a country living, which, however, did not prove to be entirely free from troubles. For some reason which is not clear, a neighbouring squire, Sir Amyas Paulet, used his power as justice of peace to set Wolsey in the stocks, an affront which Wolsey did not forgive, but in the days of his power punished by confining Sir Amyas to his London house, where he lived for some years in disgrace. If this story be true, it is certainly not to Wolsey's discredit, who can have been moved by nothing but a sense of injustice in thus reviving the remembrance of his own past history. Moreover, Wolsey's character certainly did not suffer at the time, as in 1501 he was made chaplain to Dean, Archbishop of Canterbury. After Dean's death in 1503, his capacity for business was so far established that he was employed by Sir Richard Nanfan, Deputy-Lieutenant of Calais, to help him in the duties of a post which advancing years made

somewhat onerous. When Nanfan, a few years afterwards, retired from public life, he recommended Wolsey to the king, and Wolsey entered the royal service as chaplain probably in 1506.

At Court Wolsey allied himself with Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, Lord Privy Seal, and at first seems to have acted as one of his secretaries.

Fox was a well-trained and careful official, who had been in Henry VII.'s employment all through his reign. Cold and cautious by nature, Henry VII. had to pick his way through many difficulties, and took no man unreservedly into his confidence. He was his own minister, and chose to be served by men of distinguished position who were content to do his bidding faithfully, and were free from personal ambition. For this purpose ecclesiastics were best adapted, and Henry VII. did much to secularise the Church by throwing the weight of public business into the hands of men like Morton and Fox, whom he rewarded by the highest ecclesiastical offices. In such a school Wolsey was trained as a statesman. He regarded it as natural that the King should choose his ministers for their readiness to serve his purposes, and should reward them by ecclesiastical preferments. The State might gain by such a plan, but the Church undoubtedly lost; and in following the career of Wolsey there is little to remind us of the ecclesiastic, however much we may admire the statesman.

It was well for England that Wolsey was trained in the traditions of the policy of Henry VII., which he never forgot. Henry VII. aimed, in the first place, at securing his throne and restoring quiet and order in his kingdom by developing trade and commerce. For this

purpose he strove to turn his foreign neighbours into allies without adventuring into any military enterprises. He did not aspire to make England great, but he tried to make her secure and prosperous. Wolsey gained so much insight into the means which he employed for that end that he never forgot their utility; and though he tried to pass beyond the aim of Henry VII., he preferred to extend rather than abandon the means which Henry VII. had carefully devised. Nor was Wolsey merely a spectator of Henry VII.'s diplomacy; he was soon employed as one of its agents. In the spring of 1508 he was sent to Scotland to keep King James IV. true to his alliance with England, and explain misunderstandings that had arisen. In the autumn of the same year he was sent to Mechlin to win over the powerful minister of Maximilian, the Bishop of Gurk, to a project of marriage between Henry VII. and Maximilian's daughter Margaret, by which Henry hoped that he would get control of the Low Countries. Here Wolsey learned his first practical lesson of diplomatic methods, and uttered the complaint, which in later years he gave so much reason to others to pour forth, "There is here so much inconstancy, mutability, and little regard of promises and causes, that in their appointments there is little trust or surety; for things surely determined to be done one day are changed and altered the next."

Nothing came of Wolsey's embassy, nor can we be sure that Henry VII. was much in earnest in his marriage schemes. However, he died in April next year, and was succeeded by a son whose matrimonial hesitations were destined to give Wolsey more trouble than those of his father. Before his death he laid the

foundation of Wolsey's clerical fortunes by bestowing on him the rich deanery of Lincoln.

The accession of Henry VIII. made little change in the composition of the King's Council. The Lady Margaret survived her son long enough to make her influence felt in the choice of her grandson's advisers. Archbishop Warham, Bishop Fox, and Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey, were the men into whose hands public business naturally fell. But Warham was somewhat stiff and crabbed, so that he did not commend himself to the young king. Fox represented the opinions of the old officials, while the Earl of Surrey was the natural leader of the old nobility, who could not help resenting the subordinate position into which they had been reduced by Henry VII., and hoped that a new reign would give them fresh opportunities. So Fox urged caution and carefulness, while Surrey favoured extravagance and military ambition. Fox felt that he was growing old, and the pressure of a continued conflict of opinion was irksome to him. Much as the ecclesiastics of that time were secular in their lives, they were rarely entirely forgetful of their priestly office, and were genuinely anxious to rid themselves of the burden of affairs and spend their last years in quiet. So Fox chose Wolsey as the man to take his place, perhaps because he saw in him the qualities necessary to influence the young king. Besides him he favoured Ruthal, another experienced official, who was rewarded by the rich bishopric of Durham, but who was soon eclipsed by the superior genius of Wolsey, which he frankly admitted, and willingly accepted the post of Wolsey's assistant and subordinate.

So Wolsey was made the king's almoner, and had

sundry preferments bestowed on him as marks of the royal favour. He ingratiated himself with the king, and worked with Fox and Ruthal to counteract the influence of the Earl of Surrey. Probably in 1511 he was called to the King's Council, but neither he nor Fox had it in their power to shape the king's policy as they wished, or to direct his doings. His warlike ardour was against their will; but from the beginning of his reign Henry VIII. went his own way, and others had to follow. All they could do was to show him that they were the most capable of his servants, and when Henry VIII. had determined on war they were the men to whom he turned to carry out the necessary details. On Wolsey as the youngest the chief labour was thrown. England was unprepared for war, and every branch of the military service had to be almost created. Wolsey had at all events a sufficient opportunity for displaying his practical capacity as an organiser.

So Wolsey worked at providing for the troops who were sent to Guienne in 1512; but the expedition itself was a complete failure. Ferdinand played his own game of procrastination, and sent no succours. The Marquis of Dorset was an incapable leader. The English troops were not inured to hardships, and soon grew discontented; at last they rose in open mutiny, and clamoured to be led back to England. Dorset was driven to retire without striking a blow. The first attempt of England to assert her prowess ended in disaster. The statesmen of the Continent made merry over the blundering efforts of an upstart power. "The English," they said, "are so unaccustomed to war that they have no experience to guide them." Henry

longed to wipe out this disgrace, and prepared to invade the north of France in the next year. Wolsey was not yet of sufficient importance to direct the king's policy, and had no experience of war. But he threw himself heart and soul into the task of military organisation, and the administrative capacity which he displayed secured his hold on the king's favour. He provided for victualling the fleet, raised the necessary number of ships, selected their captains, and even apportioned the gunners. Nothing was too trivial for his attention, even down to beer-barrels and biscuits. It is not surprising that his colleague, Bishop Fox, wrote to him, "I pray God send us with speed, and soon deliver you of your outrageous charge and labour."

The fleet put to sea in March 1513, under the command of the Lord Admiral Sir Edward Howard. The French fleet was far superior in numbers, and prepared to prevent the English from landing on the French coast. Sir Edward Howard was burning with desire for a decisive engagement, and on 25th April attacked the French galleys as they lay in shallow water. He boarded them with his boats, and himself leapt on to the ship of the French admiral, but before his men could follow him their cable was cut away, and he was left almost alone. Seeing that there was no hope of support, he took his whistle from his neck and cast it into the sea; then with his gilt target on his arm he fought till the enemy's pikes thrust him overboard and he was drowned. The English attack was driven back; but its gallantry and the bravery of Sir Edward Howard produced a great impression. It was clear that after all the Englishmen had not forgotten how to fight.

The efforts of the English fleet were successful in securing the peaceful landing of the army at Calais, where Henry arrived at the end of June. With him went Wolsey, commanding two hundred men, and now a necessary personage in the king's train. Such confidence was placed in him by Queen Katharine that she requested him to write to her frequently and inform her of the king's health, while in return she poured her household troubles into his sympathetic ear. No doubt Wolsey's hands were full of business of many kinds during this brief and glorious campaign, glorious in the sense that success attended its operations, but fruitless because the things done were scarcely worth the doing. The English army took Terouenne, more owing to the feebleness of the French than to their own valour. Louis XII. was prematurely old and ailing; things had gone against him in Italy, and there was little spirit in the French army. The defeat of the French outside Terouenne was so rapid that the battle was derisively called the Battle of Spurs. Henry's desire for martial glory was satisfied by the surrender of Terouenne, and his vanity was gratified by the presence of Maximilian, who in return for a large subsidy brought a few German soldiers, and professed to serve under the English king. From Terouenne he advanced to Tournai, which surrendered at the end of September. Maximilian was delighted at these conquests, of which he reaped all the benefit; with Tournai in the hands of England, Flanders had a strong protection against France. So Maximilian would gladly have led Henry to continue the campaign in the interests of the Flemish frontier. But Henry had no taste for spending a winter in the field; he

pleaded that his presence was needed in England, and departed, promising to return next year.

In truth the arms of England had won a greater victory on English ground than anything they had achieved abroad. The war against France awakened the old hostility of Scotland, and no sooner was Henry VIII. encamped before Terouenne than he received a Scottish herald bringing a message of defiance. "I do not believe that my brother of Scotland will break his oath," said Henry, "but if he does, he will live to repent it." Repentance came rapidly on the Field of Flodden, where the Scottish army was almost cut to pieces. This brilliant victory was greatly due to the energy of Queen Katharine, who wrote to Wolsey, "My heart is very good to it, and I am horribly busy with making standards, banners, and badges." She addressed the English leaders before they started for the war, bade them remember that the English courage excelled that of other nations, and that the Lord smiled on those who stood in defence of their own. With a proud heart she sent her husband the blood-stained plaid of the Scottish king, taken from his corpse. "In this," she wrote, "your Grace shall see how I keep my promise, sending you for your banner a king's coat."

The victory of Flodden Field was of great importance, for it delivered England from the fear of a troublesome neighbour, and showed Europe that England could not be muzzled by the need of care for her own borders. The Scottish power was broken for many years to come, and England was free to act as she would. Europe began to respect the power of England, though there was little reason to rate highly the wisdom of her

king. Henry had won little by his campaign ; he had gratified his vanity, but he had not advanced towards any definite end.

Henry VIII. was young and simple. He expected to captivate the world by brilliant deeds, and fascinate it by unselfish exploits. He soon found that his pretended allies were only seeking their own advantage. The name of the "Holy League" was the merest pretext. The new Pope, Leo X., a supple time-serving intriguer, trained in the deceitful policy of the Medici House, was willing to patch up the quarrel between France and the Papacy. Ferdinand of Spain wished only to keep things as they were. As he grew older he grew more suspicious, and clung to the power which he possessed. His one dread was lest Charles, the grandson of himself and Maximilian, should demand his maternal heritage of Castile. Ferdinand was resolved to keep the two Spanish kingdoms united under his own rule until his death, and considered European affairs in the first instance as they were likely to affect that issue. He was of opinion that France was no longer formidable to Spanish interests in Italy, while English successes on the Flemish frontier might make Charles more powerful than he wished him to be. Accordingly he set to work to undermine Henry's position by making an alliance with France. He was still Henry's ally, and had promised him to help him to continue the war in the spring of 1514. None the less he entered into secret negotiations with France, and cautiously endeavoured to persuade Maximilian to join him. Maximilian was still at war with Venice, and was aggrieved that he was the only member of the plundering gang who had not gained by the League of Cambrai. Fer-

Ferdinand allured him from his interest in Flanders by the prospect of a renewal of the League against Venice in his special behalf, and Maximilian was sanguine enough to listen to the temptation. He faintly stipulated that the consent of England should be obtained, but was satisfied with Ferdinand's assurance that Henry would have no objection to a truce with France. Early in April 1514 a truce for a year was made between Louis XII., Maximilian, and Ferdinand. Henry found himself tricked by his father-in-law, and abandoned by the ally whom he had largely subsidised, and had greatly benefited.

It is no wonder that Henry was greatly angered at this result, and declared that he would trust no man any more. He had taken the measure of the good faith of European rulers, and had learned the futility of great undertakings for the general welfare. In truth, the difficulty of European politics always lies in the fact that the general welfare can only be promoted by the furtherance of particular interests, which threaten in their turn to become dangerous. The interests of the sixteenth century were purely dynastic interests, and seem trivial and unworthy. We are not, however, justified in inferring that dynastic interests, because they are concerned with small arrangements, are in their nature more selfish or more iniquitous than interests which clothe themselves in more fair-sounding phrases. Their selfishness is more apparent ; it does not follow that it is less profound.

However that may be, the desertion of Maximilian and Ferdinand put a stop to Henry's warlike projects, and restored England to peace. Henry had had enough

of fighting other people's battles. He was willing to pursue his own course by the means which others used, and trust henceforth to the bloodless battles of diplomacy. In this new field Wolsey was the English champion, and for the next sixteen years the history of England is the history of Wolsey's achievements.

Wolsey's services in the campaign of 1513 gave him a firm hold of the king's favour, and secured for him large rewards. As he was an ecclesiastic his salary was paid out of the revenues of the Church. When Tournai became an English possession its bishopric was conferred on Wolsey, and on a vacancy in the bishopric of Lincoln in the beginning of 1514 that see was given him in addition. How the offices of the Church were in those days used as rewards for service to the State may be seen by the fact that the English representative in Rome was the Archbishop of York, Thomas Bainbridge, who lived as Cardinal in the Papal Court. Moreover, an Italian, Silvestro de' Gigli, held the bishopric of Worcester, though he lived habitually in Rome, and devoted his energies to the furtherance of the interests of England. In July 1514 Cardinal Bainbridge died in Rome, poisoned by one of his servants. The Bishop of Worcester was suspected of being privy to the deed for the purpose of removing out of the way a troublesome rival. It would seem, however, that the murder was prompted by vengeful feelings and the desire to hide peculations. The charge against the Bishop of Worcester was investigated by the Pope, and he was acquitted; but the story gives a poor picture of morality and security of life at Rome. On the death of Bainbridge the vacant archbishopric of York was also conferred on Wolsey, who was now

enriched by the revenues of three sees, and was clearly marked out as the foremost man in England.

He rose to this position solely by the king's favour, as the king alone chose his own ministers and counsellors, and there existed no external pressure which could influence his decisions. The Wars of the Roses had seen the downfall of the baronial power, and Henry VII. had accustomed men to see affairs managed almost entirely by a new class of officials. The ministers and counsellors of Henry VIII. were chosen from a desire to balance the old and the new system. The remnants of the baronial party were associated with officials, that they might be assimilated into the same class. The Duke of Norfolk, as the greatest nobleman in England, was powerful, and was jealous of the men with whom he found himself called upon to work. Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was the personal friend of the king, and shared in his private more than in his public life. The Earl of Surrey had done good service at Flodden Field, and was a man of practical capacity. The other ministers were most of them ecclesiastics. Warham, Archbishop of Canterbury, was respected rather than trusted. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, was a capable and painstaking official. Ruthal, Bishop of Durham, was destitute of real insight, and was content to follow Wolsey's lead. Wolsey won his way by his political genius, his quickness, and his vast power of detailed work. He owed his position entirely to the king, and was responsible to him alone. The king consulted his Council only about such matters as he thought fit; foreign affairs were managed almost entirely according to his own will and pleasure.

The English have never been famous for diplomacy, and Wolsey was ill supplied with agents for his work. The English residents at foreign Courts were not men of mark or position. John Stile at the Court of Ferdinand, and Thomas Spinelly in Flanders seem to have been merchants carrying on their own business. With Maximilian was a more important man, Sir Richard Wingfield, a Suffolk knight, who was too self-satisfied and too dull-witted to understand Wolsey's schemes. For special work special agents had to be sent, who went unwillingly to a thankless and laborious task. They were ill paid and ill supported; but even here Wolsey knew how to choose the right men, and he managed to inspire them with his own zeal and tenacity of purpose. It is a striking proof of Wolsey's genius that he knew whom he could trust, and that his trust was never misplaced.

When Henry VIII. was smarting under his rebuff from Maximilian and Ferdinand, he concerted with Wolsey how he might avenge himself, and Wolsey devised his scheme in entire secrecy. Ferdinand and Maximilian had left England in the lurch by making a truce with France. Wolsey resolved to outdo them in their own lines. They had elected to maintain the existing condition of affairs by checking England's aspirations and lending a cold support to France. Wolsey resolved to turn France into a firm ally, that so England and France united might form a new combination, before which the schemes of Ferdinand would be powerless.

Wolsey luckily had the means of approaching Louis XII. without attracting attention. Amongst the prisoners taken in the Battle of the Spurs was the

young Duke of Longueville, a favourite of the French king. He had been sent to London, to the sore disturbance of Queen Katharine, who, being a sensible woman, thought that the best thing to do with a prisoner was to confine him in the Tower. On Henry's return the Duke of Longueville was released, and amused himself at Court like any one else. Through him Wolsey opened up secret communications with Louis XII., whose domestic circumstances luckily gave a handle for Wolsey's designs. In January 1514 the French queen died; and although the widowed husband had reached the age of fifty-two, it was known that he was looking out for a young bride.

It has always been one of the most revolting features of dynastic politics that the private relationships of members of ruling families have been entirely determined by considerations of dynastic expediency. In the sixteenth century this was eminently the case. Alliances were family arrangements, and corresponded to motives of family aggrandisement rather than to national interests. They were sealed by marriages, they were broken by divorces. So great were the responsibilities of royalty that the private life of members of royal houses was entirely sunk in their official position. They were mere counters to be moved about the board at will, and disposed of according to the needs of family politics. Such a victim of circumstances was Henry VIII.'s younger sister, the Princess Mary, a bright and intelligent girl of seventeen. She was betrothed to Charles, Prince of Castile, and it had been arranged that the marriage should take place when he reached the age of fourteen. The time was

come for the fulfilment of the promise; but Ferdinand did not wish to see his troublesome grandson more closely united to England, which had shown such ambitious inclinations. Maximilian, the guardian of Charles, wavered between his desire to please Henry and Ferdinand, and invented one excuse after another for not proceeding with his grandson's marriage.

Wolsey allowed Maximilian to go on with his shifty talk, and was only too glad to see him fall into the trap. His negotiations with France were progressing, and the outward sign of the new alliance was to be the marriage of Mary to Louis XII. So secretly were the arrangements made that Europe was taken by surprise when, at the end of July, it was gradually known that the alliance between France and England was an accomplished fact. The marriage contract was soon signed, and in October Mary went to Abbeville, where she was met by her elderly husband.

The result of this clever diplomacy was to secure England the respect and envy of Europe. It was clear that henceforth England was a power which had to be reckoned with. Ferdinand was taught that he could no longer count on using his dutiful son-in-law as he thought most convenient to himself. Maximilian sadly reflected that if he needed English gold in the future he must show a little more dexterity in his game of playing fast and loose with everybody. Pope Leo X. was not over-pleased at seeing England develop a policy of her own, and looked coldly on Wolsey. After the death of Cardinal Bainbridge Henry wrote to the Pope and begged him to make Wolsey cardinal in his room. "Such are his merits," said the king, "that I esteem him above

my dearest friends, and can do nothing of importance without him." Leo X. coldly replied that there were great difficulties in the way of creating a cardinal: the title, he reminded the king, was much sought after, and admitted its bearer to the highest rank: he must wait a more suitable time. It would seem that the Pope wished to have further guarantees of England's goodwill, and hinted that Wolsey must give pledges of his good behaviour.

England did not long enjoy the diplomatic victory which Wolsey had won by his brilliant scheme of a French alliance. Henry still had a longing for military glory, with which Wolsey had little sympathy. He wished to revenge himself on his perfidious father-in-law, and proposed to Louis XII. an attack upon Navarre, and even thought of claiming a portion of the kingdom of Castile, as rightfully belonging to Queen Katharine. Whatever projects Henry may have had came to an end on the death of Louis on the 1st of January 1515. The elderly bridegroom, it was said, tried too well to humour the social disposition of his sprightly bride. He changed his manner of life, and kept late hours, till his health entirely gave way, and he sank under his well-meant efforts to renew the gallantry of youth.

CHAPTER III

THE UNIVERSAL PEACE

1515-1518

THE death of Louis XII. was a severe blow to Wolsey. The French alliance was not popular in England, and was bitterly opposed by the Duke of Norfolk and the party of the old nobility, who saw with dislike the growing influence of Wolsey. They now had an opportunity of reversing his policy and securing his downfall. It required all Wolsey's sagacity to devise a means of solving the difficulties which the death of Louis created. The new king of France, Francis I., was aged twenty-one, and was as ambitious of distinction as was Henry. The treaty between France and England had not yet been carried out, and it would require much dexterity to modify its provisions. The kings of the sixteenth century were keen men of business, and never let money slip through their hands. The widowed Queen of France must, of course, return to England, but there were all sorts of questions about her dowry and the jewels which Louis had given her. Henry claimed that she should bring back with her everything to which any title could be urged: Francis I. wished to give up as

little as possible. The two monarchs haggled like two hucksters, and neither of them had any care of the happiness or reputation of the young girl round whom they bickered. In the background stood Wolsey's enemies, who saw that if they could create a rupture between France and England Wolsey's influence would be at an end.

In these dangerous conditions Wolsey had to seek an ally in Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and had to trust to his private knowledge of the character of Queen Mary. She had the strong will of the Tudors, and had also their craving for admiration. These two qualities seem to have drawn her in opposite directions. While her marriage with Prince Charles was talked of she professed the greatest admiration for him, and gazed with rapture on a very bad portrait of her intended husband. But this did not prevent her from being attracted by the personal fascinations of the Duke of Suffolk, as Wolsey knew. When he negotiated the French alliance he had some difficulty in overcoming Mary's repugnance to an old husband; but she viewed the proposal in a business like way, and was not indifferent to the position of Queen of France. She looked forward to a speedy widowhood, and extracted from Henry a promise that, if she undertook to marry for the first time to please him, she might choose her second husband to please herself. When Mary was free the hopes of the Duke of Suffolk revived, and Wolsey knowing this, chose him as the best instrument for clearing away the difficulties raised by Francis I., and bringing back Mary honourably to England.

Francis, on his side, used his knowledge of the current

rumour to extract from Mary her confidences about Suffolk, and with this knowledge approached Suffolk as a friend. By alternately encouraging Suffolk and terrifying Mary he turned Wolsey's ambassador into an anxious lover. Still Wolsey trusted that Suffolk would the more bestir himself to bring Mary back, and would make such terms with Francis as would commend his suit to Henry. But Wolsey's enemies led Henry to make exorbitant demands, which Francis met by redoubling his persecution of Mary. At last she asked Suffolk to marry her, which he did in secret. After this Francis was free from any further need of conciliating Henry, who must take back his sister on any terms, and Wolsey was left to appease Henry as best he could. In April Mary and Suffolk returned to England, and in May the luckless pair were publicly married. Wolsey manfully befriended Suffolk in this matter, but the calculations of his diplomacy were hopelessly upset by private feelings and the rashness of passion.

However, Mary received part of her dowry and some of her jewels. Francis I. had no wish to quarrel with England, but only to make the best terms for himself. He was bent upon gathering laurels in Italy, and on 5th April renewed the alliance between France and England. This time, however, the treaty was little more than a truce, and many questions were left untouched; no mention was made of the return of Tournai, and the question of Mary's jewels was left undecided. Francis I. counted on keeping England quiet by an alliance which he formed at the same time with Ferdinand, while he won over the Flemish counsellors of Prince Charles, who betrothed himself to the infant daughter of Louis XII., Renée, a child of four.

Thus he had cleared the way for an expedition to Italy, where he longed to claim for France the Duchy of Milan, that had been won and lost by Louis XII. In July he set out contentedly, knowing that Henry was powerless to interfere. He treated England with neglect, and gave Henry no information of his movements. England looked on with growing jealousy while Francis crossed the Alps and in September defeated the Swiss mercenaries who held Milan in the name of the last Sforza Duke. The battle of Marignano (14th September) was a splendid success for Francis, who there beat back the Swiss infantry, hitherto considered invincible in Europe. The star of France had risen, and Francis could look round with proud superiority.

The princes of Europe were alarmed beyond measure at the completeness of the French success. They had looked with equanimity at the preparations of Francis, because they expected that he would be delayed, or, if he attacked the Swiss, would be defeated. But his rapid march soon convinced men that he was in earnest, and especially excited the fear of Pope Leo X., whose ingenious policy of being secretly allied with everybody was disturbed by this display of unexpected vigour. The alarm of the Pope was useful to Wolsey. It awakened him to the need of making the English king his friend, and fulfilling his desire to have Wolsey created cardinal. Wolsey had not ceased, through his agent, the Bishop of Worcester, to urge this point upon the Pope, and when Francis was well advanced on his road to Milan the pleadings of Wolsey were irresistible. "If the King of England forsake the Pope," wrote Wolsey to the Bishop

of Worcester, "he will be in greater danger on this day two years than ever was Pope Julius." Leo X. had no wish to run the risks which the impetuous Julius II. faced with unbroken spirit. He prepared to keep himself supplied with allies to protect him against all emergencies, and on 10th September nominated Wolsey cardinal sole, a special mark of favour, as cardinals were generally created in batches at intervals.

Wolsey's creation was not popular in the Roman Court. Cardinal Bainbridge had been overbearing in manner and hasty in temper, and the English were disliked for their outspokenness. England was regarded as a political upstart, and Wolsey was considered to be a fitting emblem of the country which he represented. Moreover, the attitude of England in ecclesiastical matters was not marked by that subservience which the Papacy wished to exact, and many doubted the expediency of exalting in ecclesiastical authority an English prelate of such far-reaching views as Wolsey was known to hold. An official of the Roman Court gives the following account of the current opinion:—

"Men say that an English Cardinal ought not to be created lightly, because the English behave themselves insolently in that dignity, as was shown in the case of Cardinal Bainbridge just dead. Moreover, as Wolsey is the intimate friend of the king, he will not be contented with the Cardinalate alone, but, as is the custom of these barbarians, will wish to have the office of legate over all England. If this be granted the influence of the Roman Court will be at an end; if it be not granted the Cardinal will be the Pope's enemy and will favour France. But despite all this the Pope, in whose hands

alone the matter was, created him Cardinal on the seventh of September."

This elevation of Wolsey was due to the strong expression of desire on the part of Henry, who further asked that legatine powers should be given to the new cardinal. This Leo refused for the present; he had done enough to induce Henry to enter into a secret league for the protection of the Church, which meant a convenient pretext for attacking Francis if he became too powerful in Italy. When this was arranged the red hat was sent to England, and its reception gave Wolsey an opportunity of displaying his love for magnificent ceremonial. On 17th November it was placed on his head by Archbishop Warham in Westminster Abbey.

Ceremonial, however splendid, was but an episode in Wolsey's diplomatic business. The news of the French victory at Marignano was so unpleasant that Henry VIII. for some time refused to believe it to be true. When at last it was impossible to doubt any longer, the necessity became urgent to put a spoke in the wheel of Francis I. England was not prepared to go to war with France without allies, and Wolsey developed his cleverness in attaining his ends by secret means. Nothing could be done by uniting with the cautious Ferdinand; but the flighty Maximilian was a more hopeful subject. The only troops that could be used against France were the German and Swiss mercenaries, men who made war a trade, and were trained and disciplined soldiers. The first means of injuring France was to prevent her from hiring Swiss soldiers, and the second was to induce Maximilian to undertake an

Italian expedition in his own interests. As regards the Swiss, it was merely a matter of money, for they were ready to sell themselves to the highest bidder. In like manner it was easy to subsidise Maximilian, but it was difficult to hold him to his promise and be sure that he would spend the money on the right purpose. Wolsey, however, resolved to try and use Maximilian; he offered him the aid of a large contingent of the Swiss if he would attack Milan. Knowing the delicacy of the enterprise and the slipperiness of Maximilian, Wolsey entrusted this matter to a man whose pertinacity had been already tried,—Richard Pace, secretary of Cardinal Bainbridge, who had stubbornly insisted on an investigation of the circumstances of his master's death, and had annoyed the Roman Court by his watchful care of his master's effects. Pace was sent to hire soldiers amongst the Swiss, and Wolsey's ingenuity was sorely tried to supply him with money secretly and safely.

The hindrances which beset Pace in carrying out his instructions decorously were very many. Not the least troublesome was the want of intelligence displayed by Sir Robert Wingfield, the English envoy to Maximilian. Wingfield belonged to the old school of English officials, honest and industrious, but entirely incapable of *finesse*. He did not understand what Pace was about; he could not comprehend Wolsey's hints, but was a blind admirer of Maximilian, and was made his tool in his efforts to get the gold of England and do nothing in return. But Pace was deaf to the entreaties of Maximilian and to the lofty remonstrances of Wingfield. He raised 17,000 Swiss soldiers, who were to serve under their own general, and whose pay was not to pass through Maxi-

milian's hands. Maximilian was sorely disappointed at this result, but led his troops to join the Swiss in an attack on Milan. On 24th March 1516, the combined army was a few miles from Milan, which was poorly defended, and victory seemed secure. Suddenly Maximilian began to hesitate, and then drew off his forces and retired. We can only guess at the motive of this strange proceeding; perhaps he had never been in earnest, and only meant to extract money from England. When Pace refused to pay he probably negotiated with Francis I., and obtained money from him. Anyhow his withdrawal was fatal to the expedition. The Germans at Brescia seized the money which was sent to Pace for the payment of the Swiss. The Swiss in anger mutinied, and Pace was for some days thrown into prison. Maximilian vaguely promised to return, but the Swiss troops naturally disbanded. Such was Maximilian's meanness that he threatened Pace, now deserted and broken by disappointment, that if he did not advance him money he would make peace with France. Pace, afraid to run the risk, pledged Henry VIII. to pay 60,000 florins. All this time Wingfield was convinced that it was Pace's ill-judged parsimony that had wrought this disaster, and he continued to write in a strain of superior wisdom to Wolsey. He even, at Maximilian's bidding, forged Pace's name to receipts for money. Never was diplomat in more hopeless plight than the unlucky Pace.

Wolsey saw that his plan had failed, but he put a good face upon his failure. Maximilian enjoyed the advantage which consummate meanness always gives for a moment. He put down the failure to niggardli-

ness in the supplies, and showed his goodwill towards Henry by treating him to fantastic proposals. If Henry would only cross to Flanders with 6000 men, Maximilian would meet him with his army, set him up as Duke of Milan, and resign the Empire in his favour. This preposterous scheme did not for a moment dazzle the good sense of the English counsellors. Pace, in announcing it to Wolsey, pointed out that the Emperor spoke without the consent of the Electors, that Maximilian was thoroughly untrustworthy, and that Henry in such an enterprise might imperil his hold upon the English Crown, "which," writes Pace with pardonable pride, "is this day more esteemed than the Emperor's crown and all his empire." Henry was of the same opinion; and Maximilian failed on this plea "to pluck money from the king craftily." Pace remained, and jingled English money in Maximilian's ear, as a means of preventing him from turning to France; but not a penny was Maximilian allowed to touch, to Sir Robert Wingfield's great annoyance. Pace so far succeeded, that when, in November 1516, Francis I. made an alliance with the Swiss, five of the cantons stood aloof. Pace was rewarded for his labours and sufferings by being made a secretary of state. Sir Robert Wingfield received a severe rebuke from the king, which sorely disturbed his self-complacency. But it is characteristic of Wolsey's absence of personal feeling that Wingfield was not recalled from his post. Wolsey saw that he had been no more foolish than most other Englishmen would have been in his place.

Meanwhile a change had taken place in the affairs of Europe which turned the attention of France and

England alike in a new direction. Ferdinand the Catholic died in January 1516, and the preponderance of France had so alarmed him that he laid aside his plan of dividing the power of the House of Austria by instituting his second grandson, Ferdinand, King of Spain. After the battle of Marignano he changed his will in favour of his eldest grandson, the Archduke Charles, who now added the Spanish kingdoms to his possession of the Netherlands. The young prince had just emancipated himself from the tutelage of Maximilian, but was under the influence of ministers who pursued a purely Flemish policy, and longed to give peace to the Netherlands by an alliance with France. England was connected with Flanders by commercial interests, and long negotiations had been conducted with the Flemish Government for a close alliance. But Charles's advisers were won over by France, and Charles himself was attracted by the hope of a French marriage. His position was difficult, as he was poor and helpless; he could not even go to take possession of the Spanish Crowns without help from one side or the other. Had he been older and wiser he would have seen that it was safer to accept the gold of Henry VIII., from whose future projects he had nothing to fear, rather than try and secure a precarious peace for the Netherlands by an alliance with France. However, Charles turned a cold ear to the English ambassadors, and his ministers secretly brought about a treaty with France, which was signed at Noyon in August 1516.

The Treaty of Noyon was a further rebuff to Wolsey, England was passed by in silence, and a tempting bait was laid to draw Maximilian also into the French alliance, and so leave England entirely without allies

Maximilian had been for some time at war with Venice about the possession of the towns of Brescia and Verona. The Treaty of Noyon provided that the Venetians should pay the Emperor 200,000 crowns and remain in possession of the disputed territory. Maximilian used this offer to put himself up to auction; he expressed his detestation of the peace of Noyon, but pleaded that unless Henry came to his help he would be driven by poverty to accept the proffered terms. Henry answered by a proposal that Maximilian should earn the price he fixed upon his services: let him come into the Netherlands, and work the overthrow of the unworthy ministers who gave such evil advice to their sovereign. Maximilian stipulated for the allowance which he was to receive for the expenses of a journey to the Netherlands, for which he began to make preparations. He raised all possible doubts and difficulties, and received all the money he could extract on any pretext from Henry VIII.; at last he secretly signed the Treaty of Noyon in December, and drew his payments from both parties so long as he could keep his game unsuspected.

But Wolsey was not so much deceived as Maximilian thought, and showed no discomfiture when Maximilian's shiftiness at length came to light. If Maximilian would not be faithful it was well that his untrustworthiness should be openly shown, and Francis I., who was watching his manœuvres, could not feel proud of his new ally. He knew what he had to expect from Maximilian when the 200,000 crowns were spent. The money that had been spent on Maximilian was not wasted if it gave him an encouragement to display his feebleness to the full.

So Henry maintained a dignified attitude, and showed no resentment. He received Maximilian's excuses with cold politeness, and waited for Francis I. to discover the futility of his new alliances. Maximilian was clearly of no account. Charles had gained all that he could gain from his League with France towards quieting the Netherlands; for his next step, a journey to Spain, he needed the help of England, and soon dropped his attitude of indifference. After thwarting England as much as he could, he was driven to beg for a loan to cover the expenses of his journey, and England showed no petty resentment for his past conduct. The loan was negotiated, Charles's ambassadors were honourably received, it was even proposed that he should visit Henry on his way. This honour Charles cautiously declined on the ground of ill health; but all the other marks of Henry's goodwill were accepted with gratitude, and in September 1517 Charles set out on his voyage to Spain, where he found enough to employ his energies for some time.

This conciliatory attitude of England was due to a perception that the time had come when simple opposition to France was no longer useful. England had so far succeeded as to prevent the French ascendancy from being complete: she had stemmed the current, had shown Francis I. the extent of her resources, and had displayed unexpected skill. Moreover, she had made it clear that neither she nor France could form a combination sufficiently powerful to enable the one to crush the other, and had given Francis I. a lesson as to the amount of fidelity he might expect from his allies. When it was clear to both sides that there was no hope

for far-reaching schemes, it was natural for the two powers to draw together, and seek a reasonable redress for the grievances which immediately affected them.

Chief amongst these on the French side was the possession of Tournai by the English, glorious, no doubt, as a trophy of English valour, but of very doubtful advantage to England. Negotiations about its restoration were begun as early as March 1517, and were conducted with profound secrecy. Of course Charles hoped to get Tournai into his own hands, and did not wish it to be restored to France. It was necessary to keep him in ignorance of what was going on, and not till he had sailed to Spain were there any rumours of what was passing.

Wolsey and Henry VIII. deceived the ambassadors of Charles and of Venice by their repeated professions of hostility against France, and Charles's remonstrances were answered by equivocations, so that he had no opportunity for interfering till the matter had been agreed upon as part of a close alliance between England and France. The negotiations for this purpose were long and intricate, and form the masterpiece of Wolsey's diplomatic skill. They were made more difficult by the outbreak in England of a pestilence, the sweating sickness, before which Henry fled from London and moved uneasily from place to place. Wolsey was attacked by it in June so seriously that his life was despaired of; scarcely was he recovered when he suffered from a second attack, and soon after went on a pilgrimage to Walsingham to perform a vow and enjoy change of air. But with this exception, he stuck manfully to his work in London, where, beside his manifold duties in internal

administration, he directed the course of the negotiations with France.

In fact Wolsey alone was responsible for the change of policy indicated by the French alliance. He had thoroughly carried the king with him; but he was well aware that his course was likely to be exceedingly unpopular, and that on him would fall the blame of any failure. Henry did not even inform his Council of his plans. He knew that they would all have been opposed to such a sudden change of policy, which could only be justified in their eyes by its manifest advantage in the end. Wolsey was conscious that he must not only conclude an alliance with France, but must show beyond dispute a clear gain to England from so doing.

Wolsey's difficulties were somewhat lessened by the birth of an heir to the French Crown in February 1518. France could now offer, as a guarantee for her close alliance with England, a proposal of marriage between the Dauphin and Henry's only daughter Mary. Still the negotiations cautiously went on while Wolsey drove the hardest bargain that he could. They were not finished till September, when a numerous body of French nobles came on a splendid embassy to London. Never had such magnificence been seen in England before as that with which Henry VIII. received his new allies. Even the French nobles admitted that it was beyond their power to describe. Wolsey entertained the company at a sumptuous supper in his house at Westminster, "the like of which," says the Venetian envoy, "was never given by Cleopatra or Caligula, the whole banqueting hall being decorated with huge vases of gold and silver." After the banquet a band of

mummers, wearing visors on their faces, entered and danced. There were twelve ladies and twelve gentlemen, attended by twelve torch-bearers; all were clad alike "in fine green satin, all over covered with cloth of gold, undertied together with laces of gold." They danced for some time and then removed their masks, and the evening passed in mirth. Such were the festivities of the English Court, which Shakespeare has reproduced, accurately enough, in his play of *Henry VIII*.

But these Court festivities were only preliminary to the public ceremonies whereby Wolsey impressed the imagination of the people. The proclamation of the treaty and the marriage of the Princess Mary by proxy were both the occasions of splendid ceremonies in St. Paul's Cathedral. The people were delighted by pageantry and good cheer; the opposition of old-fashioned politicians was overborne in the prevailing enthusiasm; and men spoke only of the triumph of a pacific policy which had achieved results such as warfare could not have won. Indeed, the advantages which England obtained were substantial. France bought back Tournai for 600,000 crowns, and entered into a close alliance with England, which cut it off from interference in the affairs of Scotland, which was included in the peace so long as it abstained from hostilities. But more important than this was the fact that Wolsey insisted on the alliance between France and England being made the basis of a universal peace. The Pope, the Emperor, the King of Spain, were all invited to join, and all complied with the invitation.

None of them, however, complied with goodwill, least of all Pope Leo X., whose claim to be the official

pacifier of Europe was rudely set aside by the audacious action of Wolsey. Leo hoped that the bestowal of a cardinal's hat had established a hold on Wolsey's gratitude; but he soon found that he was mistaken, and that his cunning was no match for Wolsey's force. No sooner had Wolsey obtained the cardinalate than he pressed for the further dignity of papal legate in England. Not unnaturally Leo refused to endow with such an office a minister already so powerful as to be almost independent; but Wolsey made him pay for his refusal. Leo wanted money, and the pressure of the Turk on Southern Europe lent a colour to his demand of clerical taxation for the purposes of a crusade. In 1517 he sent out legates to the chief kings of Christendom: but Henry refused to admit Cardinal Campeggio, saying that "it was not the rule of this realm to admit legates *à latere*." Then Wolsey intervened and suggested that Campeggio might come if he would exercise no exceptional powers, and if his dignity were shared by himself. Leo was forced to yield, and Campeggio's arrival was made the occasion of stately ceremonies which redounded to Wolsey's glorification. Campeggio got little for the crusade, but served to grace the festivities of the French alliance, and afterwards to convey the Pope's adhesion to the universal peace. Wolsey had taken matters out of the Pope's hand, and Leo was driven to follow his lead with what grace he could muster. Perhaps as he sighed over his discomfiture he consoled himself with the thought that the new peace would not last much longer than those previously made: if he did, he was right in his opinion.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIELD OF THE CLOTH OF GOLD

1518-1520

THE object of Wolsey's foreign policy had been attained by the universal peace of 1518. England had been set up as the mediator in the politics of Europe. The old claims of the empire and the papacy had passed away in the conflict of national and dynastic interests, in which papacy and empire were alike involved. England, by virtue of its insular position, was practically outside the objects of immediate ambition which distracted its Continental neighbours ; but England's commercial interests made her desirous of influence, and Henry VIII. was bent upon being an important personage. It was Wolsey's object to gratify the king at the least expense to the country, and so long as the king could be exalted by peaceful means, the good of England was certainly promoted at the same time. The position of England as the pacifier of Europe was one well qualified to develop a national consciousness of great duties to perform ; and it may be doubted if a country is ever great unless it has a clear consciousness of some great mission.

Wolsey's policy had been skilful, and the results

which he had obtained were glorious ; but it was difficult to maintain the position which he had won. It was one thing to proclaim a peace ; it was another to contrive that peace should be kept. One important question was looming in the distance when Wolsey's peace was signed,—the succession to the empire on Maximilian's death. Unfortunately this question came rapidly forward for decision, as Maximilian died suddenly on 12th January 1519, and the politicians of Europe waited breathlessly to see who would be chosen as his successor.

The election to the empire rested with the seven electors, the chief princes of Germany ; but if they had been minded on this occasion to exercise freely their right, it would have been difficult for them to do so. The empire had for a century been with the house of Austria, and Maximilian had schemed eagerly that it should pass to his grandson Charles. It is true that Charles was already King of Spain, Lord of the Netherlands, and King of Naples and Sicily, so that it seemed dangerous to increase still further his great dominions. But Charles urged his claim, and his great rival, Francis I. of France, entered the lists against him. Strange as it may seem that a French king should aspire to rule over Germany, Francis I. could urge that he was almost as closely connected with Germany as was Charles, whose interests were bound up with those of Spain and the Netherlands. In the face of these two competitors, it was hard for the electors to find a candidate of a humbler sort who would venture to draw upon himself the wrath of their disappointment. Moreover, the task of ruling Germany was not such as to attract a small prince. The Turks were threatening its borders, and a strong man was

needed to deal with many pressing problems of its government. The electors, however, were scarcely guilty of any patriotic considerations ; they quietly put up their votes for auction between Francis and Charles, and deferred a choice as long as they could.

Both competitors turned for help to their allies, the Pope and the King of England, who found themselves greatly perplexed. Leo X. did not wish to see French influence increased, as France was a dangerous neighbour in Italy ; nor did he wish to see the empire and the kingdom of Naples both held by the same man, for that was against the immemorial policy of the Papacy. So Leo intrigued and prevaricated to such an extent that it is almost impossible to determine what he was aiming at. He managed, however, to throw hindrances in Wolsey's path, though we cannot be sure that he intended to do so.

Wolsey's plan of action was clear, though it was not dignified. He wished to preserve England's mediating attitude and give offence to no one ; consequently, he secretly promised his help both to Charles and Francis, and tried to arrange that each should be ignorant of his promises to the other. All went well till Leo, in his diplomatic divagations, commissioned his legate to suggest to Henry VIII. that it might be possible, after all, to find some third candidate for the empire, and that he was ready to try and put off the election for that purpose, if Henry agreed. Henry seems to have considered this as a hint from the Pope to become a candidate himself. He remembered that Maximilian had offered to resign the empire in his favour, but he forgot the sufficient reasons which had led him to

dismiss the proposal as fantastic and absurd. His vanity was rather tickled with the notion of rivalling Charles and Francis, and he thought that if the Pope were on his side, his chances would be as good as theirs.

We can only guess at Wolsey's dismay when his master laid this project before him. Whatever Wolsey thought, he knew that it was useless to offer any opposition. However much he might be able to influence the king's opinions in the making, he knew that he must execute them when they were made. If Henry had made up his mind to become a candidate for the empire, a candidate he must be. All that could be done was to prevent his determination from being hopelessly disastrous. So Wolsey pointed out that great as were the advantages to be obtained by gaining the empire, there were dangers in being an unsuccessful candidate. It was necessary first to make sure of the Pope, and then to prosecute Henry's candidature by fair and honourable means. Francis was spending money lavishly to win supporters to his side : and Charles was reluctantly compelled to follow his example lest he should be outbid. It would be unwise for Henry to squander his money and simply raise the market price of the votes. Let him make it clear to the greedy Germans that they would not see the colour of England's money till the English king had been really elected.

So Wolsey sent the most cautious instructions to his agent in Rome to see if the Pope would take the responsibility of urging Henry to become a candidate; but Leo was too cautious, and affected not to understand the hint. Then in May, Pace, who was now the king's secretary, was sent to Germany to sound the electors

with equal care. He was to approach the electors who were on Francis's side, as though Henry were in favour of Francis, and was to act similarly to those who were in favour of Charles; then he was to hint cautiously that it might be well to choose some one more closely connected with Germany, and if they showed any acquiescence, was to suggest that Henry was "of the German tongue," and then was to sing his praises. Probably both Pace and Wolsey knew that it was too late to do anything serious. Pace reported that the money of France and Spain was flowing on all sides, and was of opinion that the empire was "the dearest merchandise that ever was sold," and would prove "the worst that ever was bought to him that shall obtain it." Yet still he professed to have hopes, and even asked for money to enter the lists of corruption. But this was needless, as the election at last proceeded quickly. The Pope came round to the side of Charles as being the least of two evils, and Charles was elected on 28th June.

Thus Wolsey succeeded in satisfying his master's demands without committing England to any breach with either of her allies. Henry VIII. could scarcely be gratified at the part that he had played, but Wolsey could convince him that he had tried his best, and that at any rate no harm had been done. Though Henry's proceedings were known to Francis and Charles, there was nothing at which they could take offence. Henry had behaved with duplicity, but that was only to be expected in those days; he had not pronounced himself strongly against either. The ill-will that had long been simmering between Charles V. and Francis I. had risen to the surface, and the long rivalry between

the two monarchs was now declared. Each looked for allies, and the most important ally was England. Each had hopes of winning over the English king, and Wolsey wished to keep alive, without satisfying, the hopes of both, and so establish still more securely the power of England as holding the balance of the peace of Europe.

Wolsey's conduct in this matter throws much light on his relations to the king, and the method by which he retained his influence and managed to carry out his own designs. He appreciated the truth that a statesman must lead while seeming to follow—a truth which applies equally to all forms of government. Wolsey was responsible to no one but the king, and so had a better opportunity than has a statesman who serves a democracy to obtain permission to carry out a consecutive policy. But, on the other hand, he was more liable to be thwarted and interrupted in matters of detail by the interference of a superior. Wolsey's far-seeing policy was endangered by the king's vanity and obstinacy; he could not ask for time to justify his own wisdom, but was forced to obey. Yet even then he would not abandon his own position and set himself to minimise the inconvenience. It is impossible to know how often Wolsey was at other times obliged to give way to the king and adopt the second-best course; but in this case we find clear indications of the process. When he was driven from his course, he contrived that the deviation should be as unimportant as possible.

Wolsey's task of maintaining peace by English mediation was beset with difficulties now that the breach between Francis I. and Charles V. was clearly made. It was necessary for England to be friendly to both, and

not to be drawn by its friendliness towards either to offend the other. In the matter of the imperial election English influence had been somewhat on the side of Charles, and Francis was now the one who needed propitiation. The treaty with France had provided for a personal interview between the two kings, and Francis was anxious that it should take place at once. For this purpose he strove to win the good offices of Wolsey. He assured him that in case of a papal election he could command fourteen votes which should be given in his favour. Moreover, he conferred on him a signal mark of his confidence by nominating him his plenipotentiary for the arrangements about the forthcoming interview. By this all difficulties were removed, and Wolsey stood forward before the eyes of Europe as the accredited representative of the kings of England and France at the same time. It is no wonder that men marvelled at such an unheard-of position for an English subject.

But nothing that Francis had to give could turn Wolsey away from his own path. No sooner did he know that the French interview was agreed upon than he suggested to Charles that it would be well for him also to have a meeting with the English king. The proposal was eagerly accepted, and Wolsey conducted the negotiations about both interviews side by side. Rarely did two meetings cause such a flow of ink and raise so many knotty points. At last it was agreed that Charles should visit Henry in England in an informal way before the French interview took place. It was difficult to induce the punctilious Spaniards to give way to Wolsey's requirements. It was a hard thing for

one who bore the high-sounding title of Emperor to agree to visit a King of England on his own terms. But Wolsey was resolute that everything should be done in such a way as to give France the least cause of complaint. When the Spanish envoys objected to his arrangements or proposed alterations, he brought them to their bearings by saying, "Very well : then do not do it and begone." They were made to feel their dependence on himself. The interview was of their seeking, and must be held on terms which he proposed, or not at all. This, no doubt, was felt to be very haughty conduct on Wolsey's part ; but he had set on foot the scheme of this double interview, by which Henry was to be glorified and England's mediatorial position assured. It was his business to see that his plan succeeded. So he turned a deaf ear to the offers of the Spanish ambassadors. He was not to be moved by the promise of ecclesiastical revenues in Spain. Even when the influence of Spain was proffered to secure his election to the Papacy, he coldly refused.

It has been said that Wolsey was open to bribes, and his seemingly tortuous policy has been accounted for by the supposition that he inclined to the side which promised him most. This, however, is an entire mistake. Wolsey went his own way ; but at the same time he did not disregard his personal profit. He was too great a man to be bribed ; but his greatness entailed magnificence, and magnificence is expensive. He regarded it as natural that sovereigns who threw work upon his shoulders should make some recognition of his labours. This was the custom of the time ; and Wolsey was by no means singular in receiving gifts from foreign kings.

The chief lords of Henry's Court received pensions from the King of France; and the lords of the French Court were similarly rewarded by Henry. This was merely a complimentary custom, and was open and avowed. Wolsey received a pension from Francis I., and a further sum as compensation for the bishopric of Tournai, which he resigned when Tournai was returned to France. In like manner, Charles V. rewarded him by a Spanish bishopric; but Wolsey declined the office of bishop, and preferred to receive a fixed pension secured on the revenues of the see. This iniquitous arrangement was carried out with the Pope's consent; and such like arrangements were by no means rare. They were the natural result of the excessive wealth of the Church, which was diverted to the royal uses by a series of fictions, more or less barefaced, but all tending to the weakening of the ecclesiastical organisation. Still the fact remains that Wolsey thought no shame of receiving pensions from Francis and Charles alike; but there was nothing secret nor extraordinary in this. Wolsey regarded it as only obvious that his statesmanship should be rewarded by those for whom it was exercised; but the Emperor and the King of France never hoped that by these pensions they would attach Wolsey to their side. The promise by which they tried to win him was the promise of the Papacy; and to this Wolsey turned a deaf ear. "He is seven times more powerful than the Pope," wrote the Venetian ambassador; and perhaps Wolsey himself at this time was of the same opinion.

Meanwhile Francis was annoyed when he heard of these dealings with Charles, and tried to counteract

them by pressing for an early date of his meeting with Henry VIII. It is amazing to find how large a part domestic events were made to play in these matters of high policy when occasion needed. Francis urged that he was very anxious for his queen to be present to welcome Katharine; but she was expecting her confinement, and if the interview did not take place soon she would be unable to appear. Wolsey replied with equal concern for family affairs, that the Emperor was anxious to visit his aunt, whom he had never seen, and Henry could not be so churlish as to refuse a visit from his wife's relative. Katharine, on her side, was overjoyed at this renewal of intimacy with the Spanish Court, to whose interests she was strongly attached, and tried to prevent the understanding with France, by declaring that she could not possibly have her dresses ready under three months. In her dislike of the French alliance Queen Katharine expressed the popular sentiment. The people had long regarded France as the natural enemy of England, and were slow to give up their prejudices. The nobles grew more and more discontented with Wolsey's policy, which they did not care to understand. They only saw that their expectations of a return to power were utterly disappointed; Wolsey, backed by officials such as Pace, was all-powerful, and they were disregarded. Wolsey was working absolutely single handed. It is a remarkable proof of his skill that he was able to draw the king to follow him unhesitatingly, at the sacrifice of his personal popularity, and in spite of the representations of those who were immediately around him.

Moreover, Wolsey, in his capacity of representative

of the Kings of England and France, had in his hands the entire management of all concerning the coming interview. He fixed the place with due regard to the honour of England, almost on English soil. The English king was not to lodge outside his own territory of Calais ; the spot appointed for the meeting was on the meadows between Guisnes and Ardres, on the borderland of the two kingdoms. Wolsey had to decide which of the English nobles and gentry were to attend the king, and had to assign to each his office and dignity. The king's retinue amounted to nearly 4000, and the queen's was somewhat over 1000. A very slight knowledge of human nature will serve to show how many people Wolsey must necessarily have offended. If the ranks of his enemies were large before, they must have increased enormously when his arrangements were made known.

Still Wolsey was not daunted, and however much every one, from Francis and Charles, felt aggrieved by his proceedings, all had to obey ; and everything that took place was due to Wolsey's will alone. The interview with Charles was simple. On 26th May 1520 he landed at Dover, and was met by Wolsey ; next morning Henry rode to meet him and escort him to Canterbury, which was his headquarters ; on the 29th Charles rode to Sandwich, where he embarked for Flanders. What subjects the two monarchs discussed we can only dimly guess. Each promised to help the other if attacked by France, and probably Henry undertook to bring about a joint-conference of the three sovereigns to discuss their common interests. The importance of the meeting lay in its display of friendliness ; in the warning which it gave

to France that she was not to count upon the exclusive possession of England's goodwill.

No sooner was the Emperor gone than Henry embarked for Calais, and arrived at Guisnes on 4th June. We need not describe again the "Field of the Cloth of Gold," to furnish which the art of the Renaissance was used to deck mediæval pageantry. It is enough to say that stately palaces of wood clothed the barren stretch of flat meadows, and that every ornament which man's imagination could devise was employed to lend splendour to the scene. No doubt it was barbaric, wasteful, and foolish; but men in those days loved the sight of magnificence, and the display was as much for the enjoyment of countless spectators as for the self glorification of those who were the main actors. In those days the solace of a poor man's life was the occasional enjoyment of a stately spectacle; and after all, splendour gives more pleasure to the lookers-on than to the personages of the show.

Most splendid among the glittering throng was the figure of Wolsey, who had to support the dignity of representative of both kings, and spared no pains to do it to the full. But while the jousts went on, Wolsey was busy with diplomacy; there were many points relating to a good understanding between France and England, which he wished to arrange,—the projected marriage of the Dauphin with Mary of England, the payment due from France to England on several heads, the relations between France and Scotland and the like. More important than these was the reconciliation of Charles with Francis, which Wolsey pressed to the utmost of his persuasiveness, without, however, reaching

any definite conclusion. Charles was hovering on the Flemish border, ready at a hint from Wolsey to join the conference ; but Wolsey could find no good reasons for giving it, and when the festivities came to an end on 24th June, it might be doubted if much substantial good had resulted from the interview. No doubt the French and English fraternised, and swore friendship over their cups ; but tournaments were not the happiest means of allaying feelings of rivalry, and the protestations of friendship were little more than lip-deep. Yet Wolsey cannot be blamed for being over-sanguine. It was at least a worthy end that he had before him,—the removal of long-standing hostility, the settlement of old disputes, the union of two neighbouring nations by the assertion of common aims and common interests. However we may condemn the methods which Wolsey used, at least we must admit that his end was in accordance with the most enlightened views of modern statesmanship.

When Henry had taken leave of Francis, he waited in Calais for the coming of Charles, whose visit to England was understood to be merely preliminary to further negotiations. Again Henry held the important position ; he went to meet Charles at Gravelines, where he stayed for a night, and then escorted Charles as his guest to Calais, where he stayed from 10th to 14th July. The result of the conference was a formal treaty of alliance between the two sovereigns, which Charles proposed to confirm by betrothing himself to Henry's daughter Mary. As she was a child of four years old, such an undertaking did not bind him to much ; but Mary was already betrothed to the Dauphin, while Charles was also already betrothed to

Charlotte of France, so that the proposal aimed at a double breach of existing relationships and treaties. Henry listened to this scheme, which opened up the way for further negotiation, and the two monarchs parted with protestations of friendship. It was now the turn of Francis to hang about the place where Henry was holding conference with his rival, in hopes that he too might be invited to their discussions. He had to content himself with hearing that Henry rode a steed which he had presented to him, and that his face did not look so contented and cheerful as when he was on the meadows of Guisnes. In due time he received from Henry an account of what had passed between himself and the Emperor. Henry informed him of Charles's marriage projects, and of his proposal for an alliance against France, both of which Henry falsely said that he had rejected with holy horror.

Truly the records of diplomacy are dreary, and the results of all this display, this ingenious scheming, and this deceit seem ludicrously small. The upshot, however, was that Wolsey's ideas still remained dominant, and that the position which he had marked out for England was still maintained. He had been compelled to change the form of his policy, but its essence was unchanged. European affairs could no longer be directed by a universal peace under the guarantee of England; so Wolsey substituted for it a system of separate alliances with England, by which England exercised a mediating influence on the policy of the two monarchs, whose rivalry threatened a breach of European peace. He informed Francis of the schemes of Charles, that he might show him how much depended on English mediation.

He so conducted matters that Charles and Francis should both be aware that England could make advantageous terms with either, that her interests did not tend to one side rather than the other, that both should be willing to secure her goodwill, and should shrink from taking any step which would throw her on the side of his adversary. It was a result worth achieving, though the position was precarious, and required constant watchfulness to maintain.

CHAPTER V

THE CONFERENCE OF CALAIS

1520-1521

THE most significant point in the mediatorial policy of Wolsey was the fact that it threw the Papacy entirely into the shade. What Wolsey was doing was the traditional business of the Pope, who could not openly gainsay a policy which he was bound to profess coincided with his own. So Leo X. followed Wolsey's lead of keeping on good terms with France and the Emperor alike; but Leo had no real wish for peace. He wished to gain something in Italy for the Medici, and nothing was to be gained while France and Spain suspended hostilities. Only in time of war could he hope to carry out his own plans by balancing one combatant against the other. Charles's ambassador was not wrong in saying that Leo hated Wolsey more than any other man; and Leo tried to upset his plans by drawing nearer to the imperial side.

It required very little to provoke war between Francis and Charles; either would begin the attack if the conditions were a little more favourable, or if he could secure an ally. But Charles was weak owing to the

want of unity of interest in his unwieldy dominions. Germany was disturbed by the opinions of Luther; Spain was disturbed by a revolt of the cities against long-standing misgovernment. Charles was not ready for war, nor was Francis much better provided. His coffers were empty through his lavish expenditure, and his Government was not popular. Really, though both wished for war, neither was prepared to be the aggressor; both wanted the vantage of seeming to fight in self-defence.

It was obvious that Charles had made a high bid for the friendship of England when he offered himself as the husband of the Princess Mary. Wolsey had taken care that Francis was informed of this offer, which necessarily led to a long negotiation with the imperial Court. Really Charles's marriage projects were rather complicated; he was betrothed to Charlotte of France; he had made an offer for Mary of England; but he wished to marry Isabella of Portugal for no loftier reason than the superior attractions of her dowry. His proposal for Mary of England was prompted by nothing save the desire to have Henry as his ally against France; if he could manage by fair promises to induce Henry to go to war his purpose would be achieved, and he could still go in quest of the Portuguese dower. So when Tunstal, the Master of the Rolls, went as English envoy to discuss the matter, Charles's Council raised all sorts of difficulties. Let the English king join a league with the Pope and the Emperor against France; then the Pope would grant his dispensation, which was necessary, owing to the relationship between Charles and Mary. Tunstal was bidden by Wolsey to refuse such conditions.

England would not move until the marriage had been concluded, and would not join in any league with the Pope till his dispensation was in Henry's hand. The separate alliance of England and the Emperor must be put beyond doubt to England's satisfaction before anything else could be considered. Wolsey commissioned Tunstal to adopt a lofty tone. "It would be great folly," he says, "for this young prince, not being more surely settled in his dominions, and so ill-provided with treasure and good counsellors, the Pope also being so brittle and variable, to be led into war for the pleasure of his ministers." Truly Wolsey thought he had taken the measure of those with whom he dealt, and spoke with sufficient plainness when occasion needed. But Charles's chancellor, Gattinara, a Piedmontese, who was rising into power, was as obstinate as Wolsey, and rejected the English proposals with equal scorn. "Your master," he said to Tunstal, "would have the Emperor break with France, but would keep himself free; he behaves like a man with two horses, one of which he rides, and leads the other by the hand." It was clear that nothing could be done, and Wolsey with some delight recalled Tunstal from his embassy. The closer alliance with the Emperor was at an end for the present; he had shown again that England would only forego her mediating position on her own terms.

At the same time he dealt an equal measure of rebuff to France. Before the conference at Guisnes Francis had done some work towards rebuilding the ruined walls of Ardres on the French frontier. After the conference the work was continued till England resented it as an unfriendly act. Francis was obliged to give way, and

order the building to be stopped. Neither Francis nor Charles were allowed to presume on the complacency of England, nor use their alliance with her to further their own purposes.

The general aspect of affairs was so dubious that it was necessary for England to be prepared for any emergency, and first of all Scotland must be secured as far as possible. Since the fall of James IV. at Flodden Field, Scotland had been internally unquiet. Queen Margaret gave birth to a son a few months after her husband's death, and, to secure her position, took the unwise step of marrying the Earl of Angus. The enemies of Angus and the national party in Scotland joined together to demand that the Regency should be placed in firmer hands, and they summoned from France the Duke of Albany, a son of the second son of James III., who had been born in exile, and was French in all the traditions of his education. When Albany came to Scotland as Regent, Queen Margaret and Angus were so assailed that Margaret had to flee to England for refuge in 1515, leaving her son in Albany's care. She stayed in England till the middle of 1517, when she was allowed to return to Scotland on condition that she took no part in public affairs. About the same time Albany returned to France, somewhat weary of his Scottish charge. By his alliance with Francis Henry contrived that Albany should not return to Scotland; but he could not contrive to give his sister Margaret the political wisdom which was needed to draw England and Scotland nearer together. Margaret quarrelled with her husband Angus, and only added another element of discord to those which previously existed. The safest way for England to keep

Scotland helpless was to encourage forays on the Border. The Warlen of the Western Marches, Lord Dacre of Naworth, was admirably adapted to work with Wolsey for this purpose. Without breaking the formal peace which existed between the two nations, he developed a savage and systematic warfare, waged in the shape of Border raids, which was purposely meant to devastate the Scottish frontier, so as to prevent a serious invasion from the Scottish side. Still Henry VIII. was most desirous to keep Scotland separate from France; but the truce with Scotland expired in November 1520. Wolsey would gladly have turned the truce into a perpetual peace; but Scotland still clung to its French alliance, and all that Wolsey could achieve was a prolongation of the truce till 1522. He did so, however, with the air of one who would have preferred war; and Francis I. was induced to urge the Scots to sue for peace, and accept as a favour what England was only too glad to grant.

At the same time an event occurred in England which showed in an unmistakable way the determination of Henry to go his own way and allow no man to question it. In April 1520 the Duke of Buckingham, one of the wealthiest of the English nobles, was imprisoned on an accusation of high treason. In May he was brought to trial before his peers, was found guilty, and was executed. The charges against him were trivial if true; the witnesses were members of his household who bore him a grudge. But the king heard their testimony in his Council, and committed the duke to the Tower. None of the nobles of England dared differ from their imperious master. If the king thought fit that Bucking-

ham should die, they would not run the risk of putting any obstacle in the way of the royal will. Trials for treason under Henry VIII. were mere formal acts of registration of a decision already formed.

The Duke of Buckingham, no doubt, was a weak and foolish man, and may have done and said many foolish things. He was in some sense justified in regarding himself as the nearest heir to the English throne if Henry left no children to succeed him. Henry had been married for many years, and as yet there was no surviving child save the Princess Mary. It was unwise to talk about the succession to the Crown after Henry's death; it was criminal to disturb the minds of Englishmen who had only so lately won the blessings of internal peace. If the Duke of Buckingham had really done so, he would not be undeserving of punishment; but the evidence against him was slight, and its source was suspicious. No doubt Buckingham was incautious, and made himself a mouthpiece of the discontent felt by the nobles at the French alliance and their own exclusion from affairs. No doubt he denounced Wolsey, who sent him a message that he might say what he liked against himself, but warned him to beware what he said against the king. It does not seem that Wolsey took any active part in the proceedings against the Duke, but he did not do anything to save him. The matter was the king's matter, and as such it was regarded by all. The nobles, who probably agreed with Buckingham's opinions, were unanimous in pronouncing his guilt; and the Duke of Norfolk, with tears streaming down his cheeks, condemned him to his doom. The mass of the people were indifferent to his fate, and

were willing that the king should be sole judge of the precautions necessary for his safety, with which the internal peace and outward glory of England was entirely identified. Charles and Francis stood aghast at Henry's strong measures, and were surprised that he could do things in such a high-handed manner with impunity. If Henry intended to let the statesmen of Europe know that he was not to be diverted from his course by fear of causing disorders at home he thoroughly succeeded. The death of Buckingham was a warning that those who crossed the king's path and hoped to thwart his plans by petulant opposition were playing a game which would only end in their own ruin.

Free from any fear of opposition at home, Wolsey could now give his attention to his difficult task abroad. Charles V. had been crowned at Aachen, and talked of an expedition to Rome to receive the imperial crown. Francis I. was preparing for a campaign to assert the French claims on Milan. Meanwhile he wished to hamper Charles without openly breaking the peace. He stirred up a band of discontented barons to attack Luxembourg, and aided the claimant to the crown of Navarre to enter his inheritance. War seemed now inevitable; but Wolsey remained true to his principles, and urged upon both kings that they should submit their differences to the mediation of England. Charles was busied with the revolt of the Spanish towns, and was not unwilling to gain time. After a show of reluctance he submitted to the English proposals; but Francis, rejoicing in the prospect of success in Luxembourg and Navarre, refused on the ground that Charles was not in earnest. Still Francis was afraid of incurring

England's hostility, and quailed before Wolsey's threat that if France refused mediation, England would be driven to side with the Emperor. In June 1521 he reluctantly assented to a conference to be held at Calais, over which Wolsey should preside, and decide between the pleas urged by representatives of the two hostile monarchs.

If Wolsey triumphed at having reached his goal, his triumph was of short duration. He might display himself as a mediator seeking to establish peace, but he knew that peace was well-nigh impossible. While the negotiations were in progress for the conference which was to resolve differences, events were tending to make war inevitable. When Wolsey began to broach his project, Francis was desirous of war and Charles was anxious to defer it; but Charles met with some success in obtaining promises of help from Germany in the Diet of Worms, and when that was over, he heard welcome news which reached him gradually from all sides. The revolt of the Spanish towns was dying away; the aggressors in Luxembourg had been repulsed; the troops of Spain had won signal successes in Navarre. His embarrassments were certainly disappearing on all sides. More than this, Pope Leo X., after long wavering, made up his mind to take a definite course. No doubt he was sorely vexed to find that the position which he hankered after was occupied by England; and if he were to step back into the politics of Europe, he could not defer a decision much longer. He had wavered between an alliance with France and Venice on the one side, or with the Emperor on the other. The movement of Luther in Germany had been one of the questions for

settlement in the Diet of Worms, and Luther had been silenced for a time. Leo awoke in some degree to the gravity of the situation, and saw the advantage of making common cause with Charles, whose help in Germany was needful. Accordingly he made a secret treaty with the Emperor for mutual defence, and was anxious to draw England to the same side. The religious question was beginning to be of importance, and Francis I. was regarded as a favourer of heretics, whereas Henry VIII. was strictly orthodox, was busy in suppressing Lutheran opinions at home, and was preparing his book which should confute Luther for ever.

Another circumstance also greatly affected the attitude of Charles, the death of his minister Chièvres, who had been his tutor in his youth, and continued to exercise great influence over his actions. Charles was cold, reserved, and ill-adapted to make friends. It was natural that one whom he had trusted from his boyhood should sway his policy at the first. Chièvres was a Burgundian, whose life had been spent in saving Burgundy from French aggression, and the continuance of this watchful care was his chief object till the last. His first thought was for Burgundy, and to protect that he wished for peace with France and opposed an adventurous policy. On his death in May 1521 Charles V. entered on a new course of action. He felt himself for the first time his own master, and took his responsibilities upon himself. He seems to have admitted to himself that the advice of Chievres had not always been wise, and he never allowed another minister to gain the influence Chièvres had possessed. He contented

himself with officials who might each represent some part of his dominions, and whose advice he used in turns, but none of whom could claim to direct his policy as a whole.

Chief of these officials was a Savoyard, Mercurino della Gattinara, whose diplomatic skill was now of great service to the Emperor. Gattinara was a man devoted to his master's interests, and equal to Wolsey in resoluteness and pertinacity. Hitherto Wolsey had had the strongest will amongst the statesmen of Europe, and had reaped all the advantages of his strength. In Gattinara he met with an opponent who was in many ways his match. It is true that Gattinara had not Wolsey's genius, and was not capable of Wolsey's far-reaching schemes; but he had a keen eye to the interests of the moment, and could neither be baffled by *finesse* nor overborne by menaces. His was the hand that first checked Wolsey's victorious career.

So it was that through a combination of causes the prospects of peace suddenly darkened just as Wolsey was preparing to stand forward as the mediator of Europe. Doubtless he hoped, when first he put forward the project of a conference, that it might be the means of restoring his original design of 1518, a European peace under the guarantee of England. Since that had broken down he had been striving to maintain England's influence by separate alliances; he hoped in the conference to use this position in the interests of peace. But first of all the alliance with the Emperor must be made closer, and the Emperor showed signs of demanding that this closer alliance should be purchased by a breach with France. If war was inevitable, England had

most to gain by an alliance with Charles, to whom its friendship could offer substantial advantages, as England, in case of war, could secure to Charles the means of communicating between the Netherlands and Spain, which would be cut off if France were hostile and the Channel were barred by English ships. Moreover the prospect of a marriage between Charles and the Princess Mary was naturally gratifying to Henry; while English industry would suffer from any breach of trading relations with the Netherlands, and the notion of war with France was still popular with the English.

So Wolsey started for Calais at the beginning of August with the intention of strengthening England's alliance with the Emperor, that thereby England's influence might be more powerful. Charles on the other hand was resolved on war; he did not wish for peace by England's mediation, but he wished to draw England definitely into the league between himself and the Pope against France. Wolsey knew that much depended on his own cleverness, and nerved himself for the greatest caution, as Francis was beginning to be suspicious of the preparations of Charles, and the attitude of affairs was not promising for a pacific mediation.

This became obvious at the first interview of Wolsey with the imperial envoys, foremost amongst whom was Gattinara. They were commissioned to treat about the marriage of Charles with the Princess Mary, and about a secret undertaking for war against France; but their instructions contained nothing tending to peace. The French envoys were more pacific, as war was not popular in France.

On 7th August the conference was opened under Wolsey's presidency; but Gattinara did nothing save dwell upon the grievances of his master against France; he maintained that France had been the aggressor in breaking the existing treaty; he had no powers to negotiate peace or even a truce, but demanded England's help, which had been promised to the party first aggrieved. The French retorted in the same strain, but it was clear that they were not averse to peace, and were willing to trust to Wolsey's mediation. Wolsey saw that he could make little out of Gattinara. He intended to visit the Emperor, who had come to Bruges for the purpose, as soon as he had settled with the imperial envoys the preliminaries of an alliance; now he saw that the only hope of continuing the conference lay in winning from Charles better terms than the stubborn Gattinara would concede. So he begged the French envoys to remain in Calais while he visited the Emperor and arranged with him personally for a truce. As the French were desirous of peace, they consented.

On 16th August Wolsey entered Bruges in royal state, with a retinue of 1000 horsemen. Charles came to the city gate to meet him, and received him almost as an equal. Wolsey did not dismount from his horse, but received Charles's embrace seated. He was given rooms in Charles's palace, and the next day at church Charles sat by Wolsey's side and shared the same kneeling stool with him. Their private conferences dealt solely with the accord between England and the Emperor. Wolsey saw that it was useless to urge directly the cause of peace, and trusted to use for this purpose the advantages which his alliance would give.

He succeeded, however, in considerably modifying the terms which had been first proposed. He diminished the amount of dowry which Mary was to receive on her marriage, and put off her voyage to the Emperor till she should reach the age of twelve, instead of seven, which was first demanded. Similarly he put off the period when England should declare war against France till the spring of 1523, though he agreed that if war was being waged between Francis and Charles in November, England should send some help to Charles. Thus he still preserved England's freedom of action, and deferred a rupture with France. Every one thought that many things might happen in the next few months, and that England was pledged to little. Further, Wolsey guarded the pecuniary interests of Henry by insisting that if France ceased to pay its instalments for the purchase of Tournai, the Emperor should make good the loss. He also stipulated that the treaty should be kept a profound secret, so that the proceedings of the conference should still go on.

Wolsey was impressed by Charles, and gave a true description of his character to Henry: "For his age he is very wise and understanding his affairs, right cold and temperate in speech, with assured manner, couching his words right well and to good purpose when he doth speak." We do not know what was Charles's private opinion of Wolsey. He can scarcely have relished Wolsey's lofty manner, for Wolsey bore himself with all the dignity of a representative of his king. Thus, the King of Denmark, Charles's brother-in-law, was in Bruges, and sought an interview with Wolsey, who answered that it was unbecoming for him to receive in

his chamber any king to whom he was not commissioned; if the King of Denmark wished to speak with him, let him meet him, as though by accident, in the garden of the palace.

When the provisions of the treaty had been drafted, Wolsey set out for Calais on 26th August, and was honourably escorted out of Bruges by the Emperor himself. On his return the business of the conference began, and was dragged on through three weary months. The imperial envoys naturally saw nothing to be gained by the conference except keeping open the quarrel with France till November, when Henry was bound to send help to the Emperor if peace were not made. Wolsey remained true to his two principles: care for English interests, and a desire for peace. He secured protection for the fishery of the Channel in case of war, and he cautiously strove to lead up both parties to see their advantage in making a truce if they could not agree upon a peace. It was inevitable that these endeavours should bring on Wolsey the suspicions of both. The French guessed something of the secret treaty from the warlike appearance which England began to assume, and cried out that they were being deceived. The imperial envoys could not understand how one who had just signed a treaty with their master, could throw obstacles in their way and pursue a mediating policy of his own. Really both sides were only engaged in gaining time, and their attention was more fixed upon events in the field than on any serious project of agreement.

When in the middle of September the French arms won some successes, Gattinara showed himself inclined to negotiate for a truce. The conference, which hitherto

had been merely illusory, suddenly became real, and Wolsey's wisdom in bargaining that England should not declare war against France till the spring of 1523 became apparent. He could urge on Gattinara that it would be wise to agree to a truce till that period was reached; then all would be straightforward. So Wolsey adjourned the public sittings of the conference, and negotiated privately with the two parties. The French saw in a year's truce only a means of allowing the Emperor to prepare for war, and demanded a substantial truce for ten years. Wolsey used all his skill to bring about an agreement, and induced Gattinara to accept a truce for eighteen months, and the French to reduce their demands to four years. But Charles raised a new difficulty, and claimed that all conquests made in the war should be given up. The only conquest was Fontarabia, on the border of Navarre, which was still occupied by the French. Francis not unnaturally declined to part with it solely to obtain a brief truce, as Charles had no equivalent to restore. Wolsey used every argument to induce the Emperor to withdraw his claim; but he was obstinate, and the conference came to an end. It is true that Wolsey tried to keep up appearances by concluding a truce for a month, that the Emperor might go to Spain and consult his subjects about the surrender of Fontarabia.

So Wolsey departed from Calais on 25th November, disappointed and worn out. As he wrote himself, "I have been so sore tempested in mind by the untowardness of the chancellors and orators on every side, putting so many difficulties and obstacles to condescend to any reasonable conditions of truce and abstinence of war,

that night nor day I could have no quietness nor rest." There is no doubt that Wolsey wrote what he felt. He had laboured hard for peace, and had failed. If he hoped that the labours of the conference might still be continued by his diplomacy in England, that hope was destroyed before he reached London. On 1st December the imperial troops captured Tournai, which they had been for some time besieging, and news came from Italy that Milan also had fallen before the forces of the Emperor and the Pope. Charles had seemed to Wolsey unreasonable in his obstinacy. He had refused a truce which he had every motive of prudence for welcoming; and now events proved that he was justified. Not only had Francis been foiled in his attempts to embarrass his rival, but success had followed the first steps which Charles had taken to retaliate. The time for diplomacy was past, and the quarrel must be decided by the sword.

So Wolsey saw his great designs overthrown. He was a peace minister because he knew that England had nothing to gain from war. He had striven to keep the peace of Europe by means of England's mediation, and his efforts had been so far successful as to give England the first place in the counsels of Europe. But Wolsey hoped more from diplomacy than diplomacy could do. Advice and influence can do something to check the outbreak of war when war is not very seriously designed; but in proportion as great interests are concerned, attempts at mediation are useless unless they are backed by force. England was not prepared for war, and had no troops by whom she could pretend to enforce her counsels. When the two rival powers began

to be in earnest, they admitted England's mediation only as a means of involving her in their quarrel. Wolsey was only the first of a long series of English ministers who have met with the same disappointment from the same reason. England in Wolsey's days had the same sort of interest in the affairs of the Continent as she has had ever since. Wolsey first taught her to develop that interest by pacific counsels, and so long as that has been possible, England has been powerful. But when a crisis comes England has ever been slow to recognise its inevitableness; and her habit of hoping against hope for peace has placed her in an undignified attitude for a time, has drawn upon her reproaches for duplicity, and has involved her in war against her will.

This was now the net result of Wolsey's endeavours, a result which he clearly perceived. His efforts of mediation at Calais had been entirely his own, and he could confide to no one his regret and his disappointment. Henry was resolved on war when Wolsey first set forth, and if Wolsey had succeeded in making a truce, the credit would have been entirely his own. He allowed Henry to think that the conference at Calais was merely a pretext to gain time for military preparations; if a truce had been made he would have put it down to the force of circumstances; as his efforts for a truce had failed, he could take credit that he had done all in his power to establish the king's reputation throughout Christendom, and had fixed the blame on those who would not follow his advice. It is a mark of Wolsey's conspicuous skill that he never forgot his actual position, and never was so entirely absorbed in his own plans as not to leave himself a ready

means for retreat. His schemes had failed ; but he could still take credit for having furthered other ends which were contrary to his own. Henry was well contented with the results of Wolsey's mission, and showed his satisfaction in the customary way of increasing Wolsey's revenues at the expense of the Church. The death was announced of the Abbot of St. Albans, and the king, in answer to Wolsey's request, ordered the monks to take Wolsey for their abbot, saying, " My lord cardinal has sustained many charges in this his voyage, and hath expended £10,000." So kings were served, and so they recompensed their servants.

CHAPTER VI

THE IMPERIAL ALLIANCE

1521-1523

THE failure of Wolsey's plans was due to the diplomacy of Gattinara and to the obstinacy of Charles V., who showed at the end of the negotiations at Calais an unexpected readiness to appreciate his obligations towards his dominions as a whole, by refusing to abandon Fontarabia lest thereby he should irritate his Spanish subjects. It was this capacity for large consideration that gave Charles V. his power in the future ; his motives were hard to discover, but they always rested on a view of his entire obligations, and were dictated by reasons known only to himself. Even Wolsey did not understand the Emperor's motives, which seemed to him entirely foolish. He allowed himself to take up a haughty position, which deeply offended Charles, who exclaimed angrily, "This cardinal will do everything his own way, and treats me as though I were a prisoner." Charles treasured up his resentment, of which Wolsey was entirely unconscious, and was determined not to allow so masterful a spirit to become more powerful.

He soon had an opportunity of acting on this deter-

mination, as the unexpected death of Pope Leo X. on 1st December naturally awakened hopes in Wolsey's breast. It was impossible that the foremost statesman in Europe should not have had the legitimate aspiration of reaching the highest office to which he could attain. But though Wolsey was ready when the opportunity came to press his own claims with vigour, it cannot be said with fairness that his previous policy had been in any way directed to that end, or that he had swerved in the least from his own path to further his chances for the papal office. Indeed he had no reason for so doing, as Leo was only forty-six years old when he died, and his death was entirely unforeseen. Moreover, we know that when the Spanish envoys offered Wolsey the Emperor's help towards the Papacy in 1520, Wolsey refused the offer; since then Charles at Bruges had repeated the offer without being asked. Now that a vacancy had arisen, it was natural for Wolsey to attach some weight to this promise, and Henry expressed himself warmly in favour of Wolsey's election, and urged his imperial ally to work by all means for that end. He sent to Rome his favourite secretary Pace to further it by pressing representations to the cardinals.

It does not seem that Wolsey was very sanguine in his expectations of being elected. Leo X. had died at a moment of great importance for Charles V.; in fact his death had been brought about by the imprudence which he showed in manifesting his delight at the success of the imperial arms against Milan, and his prospect of the overthrow of France. It was necessary for Charles that a Pope should be elected who would hold to Leo's policy, and would continue the alliance with England. The man

who held in his hand the threads of Leo X.'s numerous intrigues was his cousin, Cardinal Giulio de' Medici, and Wolsey admitted the advantages to be gained by his election. Wolsey at once declared that he submitted his candidature to the decision of Henry VIII. and the Emperor; if they thought that he was the best person to promote their interests he would not shrink from the labour; but he agreed that if his candidature were not likely to be acceptable to the cardinals, the two monarchs should unite in favour of Cardinal Medici. Charles's ambassador wrote him that it would be well to act carefully, as Wolsey was watching to see how much faith he could put in the Emperor's protestations of goodwill.

So Charles was prepared, and acted with ambiguous caution. He put off communicating with Henry as long as he could; he regretted that he was in the Netherlands instead of Germany, whence he could have made his influence felt in Rome; he secretly ordered his ambassador in Rome to press for the election of Cardinal Medici, but gave him no definite instructions about any one else; finally he wrote a warm letter in favour of Wolsey, which he either never sent at all, or sent too late to be of any use, but which served as an enclosure to satisfy Henry VIII. Wolsey was not deceived by this, and knew how papal elections might be influenced. He told the Spanish ambassador that, if his master were in earnest, he should order his troops to advance against Rome, and should command the cardinals to elect his nominee; he offered to provide 100,000 ducats to cover the expenses of such action. When it came to the point Wolsey was a very practical politician, and was under

no illusions about the fair pretences of free choice which surrounded a papal election. He treated it as a matter to be settled by pressure from outside, according to the will of the strongest. There is something revoltingly cynical in this proposal. No doubt many men thought like Wolsey, but no one else would have had the boldness to speak out. Wolsey's outspokenness was of no avail at the time, but it bore fruits afterwards. He taught Henry VIII. to conceive the possibility of a short way of dealing with refractory popes. He confirmed his willing pupil in the belief that all things may be achieved by the resolute will of one who rises above prejudice and faces the world as it is. When he fell he must have recognised that it was himself who trained the arm which smote him.

In spite of Wolsey's advice Charles did not allow Spanish influence to be unduly felt in the proceedings of the conclave. Rarely had the cardinals been more undecided, and when they went into the conclave on 27th December, it was said that every one of them was a candidate for the Papacy. The first point was to exclude Cardinal Medici, and it could be plausibly urged that it was dangerous to elect two successive popes from the same family. Medici's opponents succeeded in making his election impossible, but could not agree upon a candidate of their own; while Medici tried to bring about the election of some one who would be favourable to the Emperor. At last in weariness the cardinals turned their thoughts to some one who was not present. Wolsey was proposed, and received seven votes; but Medici was waiting his time, and put forward Cardinal Adrian of Utrecht, who had been Charles's tutor,

and was then governing Spain in his master's name. Both parties agreed on him, chiefly because he was personally unknown to any of the cardinals, had given no offence, was well advanced in years, and was reckoned to be of a quiet disposition, so that every one had hopes of guiding his counsels. It was clear that the imperialists were strongest in the conclave, and of all the imperialist candidates Adrian was the least offensive to the French. One thing is quite clear, that Charles V. had not the least intention of helping Wolsey.

Wolsey probably knew this well enough, and was not disappointed. He bore the Emperor no ill-will for his lukewarmness; indeed he had no ground for expecting anything else. Wolsey's aim was not the same as that of Charles, and Charles had had sufficient opportunity to discover the difference between them. Probably Wolsey saw that the alliance between England and the Emperor would not be of long duration, as there was no real identity of interests. Henry VIII. was dazzled for a moment with the prospect of asserting the English claims on France; he was glad to find himself at one with his queen, who was overjoyed at the prospect of a family alliance with her own beloved land of Spain. The English nobles rejoiced at an opportunity to display their prowess, and hoped in time of war to recover the influence and position of which they had been deprived by an upstart priest. The sentiment of hostility to France was still strong amongst the English people, and the allurements of a spirited foreign policy were many. But as a matter of fact England was ill prepared for war; and though the people might throw up their caps at first, they would not long consent to pay for a war

which brought them no profits. And the profits were not likely to be great, for Charles had no wish to see England's importance increased. He desired only English help to achieve his own purposes, and was no more trustworthy as an ally than had been his grandfather Ferdinand.

However, war had been agreed upon, and all that Wolsey could do was to try and put off its declaration until he had secured sufficient assurance that English money was not to be spent to no purpose. Charles V., who was in sore straits for money, asked for a loan from England, to which Wolsey answered that England could not declare war till the loan was repaid. He insisted that no declaration of war should be made till the Emperor had fulfilled his promise to pay a visit to England, a promise which Charles's want of money rendered him unable for some time to keep.

But however much Wolsey might try to put off the declaration of war, it was inevitable. Francis could not be expected, for all Wolsey's fine promises, to continue his payments for Tournai to so doubtful an ally as Henry, nor could he resist from crippling England as far as he could. The Duke of Albany went back to Scotland; and in the beginning of May Francis ordered the seizure of goods lying at Bordeaux for shipment to England. This led to retaliation on the part of England, and war was declared against France on 28th May 1522.

This coincided with the visit of Charles V. to London, where he was magnificently entertained for a month, while the treaty of alliance was being finally brought into shape by Wolsey and Gattinara. Wolsey contented

himself with providing that the alliance did not go further than had been agreed at Bruges, and that England's interests were secured by an undertaking from Charles that he would pay the loss which Henry VIII. sustained by the withdrawal of the French instalments for Tournai. When the treaty was signed it was Wolsey who, as papal legate, submitted both princes to ecclesiastical censures in case of a breach of its provisions. Moreover, Charles granted Wolsey a pension of 9000 crowns in compensation for his loss from Tournai, and renewed his empty promise of raising him to the Papacy.

It was one thing to declare war and another to carry it on with good effect. England, in spite of all the delays which Wolsey had contrived to interpose, was still unprepared. It was late in the autumn before forces could be put in the field, and the troops of Charles V. were too few for a joint undertaking of any importance. The allies contented themselves with invading Picardy, where they committed useless atrocities, burning houses, devastating the country, and working all the mischief that they could. They did not advance into the centre of France, and no army met them in the field; in the middle of October they retired ingloriously. It is hard to discover the purpose of such an expedition. The damage done was not enough to weaken France materially, and such a display of barbarity was ill suited to win the French people to favour Henry VIII.'s claim to be their rightful lord. If Francis I. had been unpopular before, he was now raised to the position of a national leader whose help was necessary for the protection of his subjects.

The futile result of this expedition caused mutual recriminations between the new allies. The imperialists complained that the English had come too late; the English answered that they had not been properly supported. There were no signs of mutual confidence; and the two ministers, Wolsey and Gattinara, were avowed enemies, and did not conceal their hostility. The alliance with the Emperor did not show signs of prospering from the beginning.

The proceedings of the Earl of Surrey and the direction of the campaign were not Wolsey's concern. He was employed nearer home, in keeping a watchful eye on Scotland, which threatened to be a hindrance to Henry VIII.'s great undertakings abroad. The return of the Duke of Albany in December 1521 was a direct threat of war. Albany was nominally regent, but had found his office troublesome, and had preferred to spend the last five years in the gaities of the French Court rather than among the rugged nobles of Scotland. They were years when France was at peace with England and had little interest in Scottish affairs; so Queen Margaret might quarrel with her husband at leisure, while the Scottish lords distributed themselves between the two parties as suited them best. But when war between France and England was approaching, the Duke of Albany was sent back by Francis I. to his post as agent for France in Scottish affairs. Queen Margaret welcomed him with joy, hoping that he would further her plan of gaining a divorce from the Earl of Angus. Before this union of forces the English party in Scotland was powerless. It was in vain that Henry VIII. tried by menaces to influence either his sister or the Scottish lords. As soon

as the English forces sailed for France Albany prepared to invade England.

It was lucky for Henry VIII. that he was well served on the Borders by Lord Dacre of Naworth, who managed to show the Scots the measure of Albany's incapacity. Dacre began negotiations with Albany, to save time ; and when, in September, the Scottish forces passed the Border, Albany was willing to make a truce. As a matter of fact, England was totally unprepared to repel an invasion, and Albany might have dictated his own terms. But Dacre, in Carlisle, which he could not defend, maintained his courage, and showed no signs of fear. He managed to blind Albany to the real state of affairs, and kept him from approaching to the crumbling walls of Carlisle. He advanced to the Debatable Land to meet him, and "with a high voice" demanded the reason of his coming ; and the parley thus begun ended in the conclusion of a month's truce. Wolsey was overjoyed at this result, but yet found it necessary to intercede with the king for Dacre's pardon, as he had no authority to make terms with the enemy ; and Dacre was not only forgiven, but thanked. This futile end to an expedition for which 80,000 soldiers had been raised ruined Albany's influence, and he again retired to France at the end of October.

Wolsey at once saw the risk which England had run. A successful invasion on the part of the Scots would have been a severe blow to England's military reputation ; and Wolsey determined to be secure on the Scottish side for the future. The Earl of Surrey, on his return from his expedition in France, was put in charge of the defences of the Border, and everything was done

to humour Queen Margaret, and convince her that she had more to gain from the favour of her brother than from the help of the Duke of Albany. Moreover, Wolsey, already convinced of the uselessness of the war against France, was still ready to gain from it all that he could, and strove to use the threat of danger from Scotland as a means of withdrawing from war and gaining a signal triumph. Francis I., unable to defend himself, tried to separate his enemies, and turned to Charles V. with offers of a truce. When this was refused, he repeated his proposals to England, and Wolsey saw his opportunity. He represented to Charles that so long as England was menaced by Scotland she could send little effective help abroad; if Scotland were crushed she would be free again. He suggested that the Emperor had little to win by military enterprises undertaken with such slight preparation as the last campaign; would he not make truce for a year, not comprehending the realm of Scotland?

The suggestion was almost too palpable. Gattinara answered that Henry wished to use his forces for his private advantage, and neglected the common interest of the alliance. Again bitter complaints were made of Wolsey's lukewarmness. Again the two allies jealously watched each other lest either should gain an advantage by making a separate alliance with France. And while they were thus engaged the common enemy of Christendom was advancing, and Rhodes fell before the Turkish arms. It was in vain that Adrian VI. lamented and wept; in vain he implored for succours. Fair promises alone were given him. Europe was too much intent on the duel between Francis and Charles to think

seriously of anything else. The entreaties of the Pope were only regarded by all parties as a good means of enabling them to throw a decent veil over any measure which their own interests might prompt. They might declare that it was taken for the sake of the holy war; they might claim that they had acted from a desire to fulfil the Pope's behest.

So things stood in the beginning of 1523, when an unexpected event revived the military spirit of Henry VIII., and brought the two half-hearted allies once more closely together, by the prospect which it afforded of striking a deadly blow at France. The chief of the nobles of France, the sole survivor of the great feudatories, the Constable of Bourbon, was most unwisely affronted by Francis I., at a time when he needed to rally all his subjects round him. Not only was Bourbon affronted, but also a lawsuit was instituted against him, which threatened to deprive him of the greater part of his possessions. Bourbon, who could bring into the field 6000 men, did not find his patriotism strong enough to endure this wrong. He opened up secret negotiations with Charles, who disclosed the matter to Henry. Henry's ambition was at once fired. He saw Francis I., hopelessly weakened by a defection of the chief nobles, incapable of withstanding an attack upon the interior of his land, so that the English troops might conquer the old provinces which England still claimed, and victory might place upon his head the crown of France.

Wolsey was not misled by this fantastic prospect, but as a campaign was imminent, took all the precautions he could that it should be as little costly as possible to England, and that Charles should bear his full share of

the expense. He demanded, moreover, that Bourbon should acknowledge Henry VIII. as the rightful King of France—a demand which was by no means acceptable to Charles. He sent an envoy of his own to confer with Bourbon, but his envoy was delayed on the way, so that the agreement was framed in the imperial interests alone, and the demands of Henry were little heeded. The agreement was that Bourbon should receive the hand of one of the Emperor's sisters, and should receive a subsidy of 200,000 crowns to be paid equally by Henry and Charles; the question of the recognition of Henry as rightful King of France was to be left to the decision of the Emperor.

The plan of the campaign was quickly settled. Charles, with 20,000 men, was to advance into Guienne; Henry, with 15,000 English, supported by 6000 Netherlanders, was to advance through Picardy; 10,000 Germans were to advance through Burgundy; and Bourbon was to head a body of dissatisfied nobles of France. It was an excellent plan on paper; and, indeed, the position of France seemed hopeless enough. Francis I. had squandered his people's money, and was exceedingly unpopular; Wolsey's diplomacy had helped to win over the Swiss to the imperial alliance; and the indefatigable secretary Pace had been sent to Venice to detach the republic from its connexion with France. It was believed that Wolsey was jealous of Pace's influence with Henry VIII., and contrived to keep him employed on embassies which removed him from the Court. At all events, he certainly kept him busily employed till his health gave way under the excessive pressure. To lend greater weight to Pace's arguments, Wolsey descended

to an act of overbearing insolence. Some Venetian galleys trading with Flanders put in at Plymouth during a storm; they were laid under an embargo, and were detained on many flimsy pretexts. It was in vain that the Venetian ambassador remonstrated; Wolsey always had a plausible answer. Probably he wished to show Venice that its trading interests required the friendship of England. At all events the galleys were not released till Venice was on the point of joining the imperial alliance. Even then Wolsey had the meanness to carry off a couple of guns from each vessel, and Venice had to make a present of them to the English king with as much grace as the circumstances allowed. This little incident certainly shows Wolsey's conduct at its worst, and confirms the impression of contemporaries, that he had to some degree the insolence of an upstart, and sometimes overrode the weak in a way to leave behind a bitter feeling of resentment.

However, Venice joined the Emperor, and Pope Adrian VI., who had pursued hitherto a policy of pacification, was at last overborne by the pressure of England and the Emperor, so that he entered into a defensive league against France. Thus France was entirely isolated. Distrusted at home and unbefriended abroad, she seemed to be a prey to her enemies; and Henry's hopes rose so high that he gleefully looked forward to being recognised as "governor of France," and that "they should by this means make a way for him as King Richard did for his father." Wiser men shook their heads at the king's infatuation. "I pray God," wrote More to Wolsey, "if it be good for his Grace and for this realm that then it may prove

so ; and else in the stead thereof I pray God send his grace an honourable and profitable peace."

The spirit that breathes through this prayer is not a martial spirit, and no doubt More's feelings represented those of Wolsey, who, though carried away by the king's military zeal, had little hopes of any great success, and such hopes as he had were rapidly destroyed. The campaign did not begin till the end of September ; the contingent from the Netherlands was late in appearing and was ill supplied with food. Till the last moment Wolsey urged, as the first object of the campaign, the siege of Boulogne, which, if successful, would have given England a second stronghold on the French coast ; but Wolsey was overruled, and an expedition into the interior of France was preferred. It was a repetition of the raid made in the last year, and was equally futile. The army advanced to Montdidier, and expected tidings of its confederate ; but nothing was to be heard of Bourbon ; his lanzknechts began to devastate France and then disbanded. The army of Charles V. contented itself with taking Fontarabia, and did not co-operate with the English forces. After the capture of Montdidier the troops, who were attacked by sickness, and had difficulty in finding provisions, withdrew to the coast ; and the Duke of Suffolk brought back his costly army without having obtained anything of service to England. This expedition, which was to do so much, was a total failure—there was positively nothing to be shown in return for all the money spent.

Again the wisdom of Wolsey's policy was fully justified. He was right in thinking that England had

neither troops nor generals who were sufficient for an expedition on the Continent, where there was nothing tangible to be gained. So long as England was a neutral and mediating power she could pursue her own interests; but her threats were more efficacious than her performances. She could not conquer unaided, and her allies had no intention of allowing her to win more than empty glory. Even this had been denied in the last campaigns. England had incurred debts which her people could ill afford to pay, and had only lowered her reputation by a display of military incompetence. Moreover, her expedition against France involved her in the usual difficulties on the side of Scotland. Again there was a devastating war along the Border: again the Duke of Albany was sent from France and raised an army for the invasion of England. But this time Wolsey had taken his precautions, and the Earl of Surrey was ready to march against him. When in November Albany crossed the Tweed and besieged the Castle of Wark, Surrey took the field, and again Albany showed his incapacity as a leader. He retired before Surrey's advance, and wished to retire to France, but was prevented by the Scottish lords. Again the Border raids went on with their merciless slaughter and plunder, amidst which was developed the sternness and severity which still mark the character of the northern folk.

Still, though the Scots might be defeated in the field, their defeat and suffering only served to strengthen the spirit of national independence. The subjugation of Scotland to England was hindered, not helped, by the alliance with the Emperor, which only drew Scotland

nearer to France, and kept alive the old feeling of hostility. It was hard to see what England had to gain from the imperial alliance, and events soon proved that Charles V. pursued his own interests without much thought of the wishes of Henry VIII.

On 14th September died Pope Adrian VI., a weary and disappointed man. Again there was a prospect of Wolsey's election to the papacy; again it might be seen how much Charles V. would do for his English ally. Wolsey had little hope of his good offices, and was his own negotiator in the matter. He was not sanguine about his prospects of success, as he knew that Cardinal Medici was powerful in Rome; and the disasters of the pontificate of Adrian VI. led the cardinals to wish for a return to the old policy of Leo X., of which Medici held the threads. So two letters were sent to the English representatives in Rome, one in behalf of Wolsey, the other in behalf of Medici. If things were going for Medici, Wolsey was not to be pressed; only in case of a disagreement was Wolsey to be put forward, and then no effort was to be spared; money was to be of no object, as Henry would make good any promises made on his behalf to secure Wolsey's election.

The conclave was protracted; it sat from 1st October to 17th November, and there was ample opportunity for Charles to have made his influence felt in Wolsey's behalf. He professed to Henry that he was doing so. He wrote a letter recommending Wolsey to his envoy in Rome, and then gave orders that the courier who carried the letter should be detained on the way. Really his influence was being used for Medici,

and though a strong party in the conclave opposed Medici's election, it does not appear that Wolsey was ever put forward as a competitor. The cardinals would hear nothing of a foreigner, and the stubbornness of Medici's party was at length rewarded by his election. There is no trace that Wolsey was keenly disappointed at this result. In announcing it to Henry VIII., he wrote, "For my part, as I take God to record, I am more joyous thereof than if it had fortun'd upon my person, knowing his excellent qualities most meet for the same, and how great and sure a friend your Grace and the Emperor be like to have of him, and I so good a father."

Few popes came to their office amid greater expectations, and few more entirely disappointed them than did Guilio de' Medici. Clement VII., whose election Charles, Henry, and Wolsey united in greeting with joy, suffered in a brief space entire humiliation at the hands of Charles, caused the downfall of Wolsey, and drove Henry to sever the bond between the English Church and the Holy See. It is impossible not to think how different would have been the course of events if Wolsey had presided over the destinies of the Church

CHAPTER VII

RENEWAL OF PEACE

1523-1527

THE events of the year 1523 had practically made an end of the imperial alliance. Henry VIII. was not in a position to go to war again, and his confidence in Charles V.'s good intentions towards him was dispelled. Charles and Francis had had enough of war, and both of them secretly desired peace, but neither would make the first move towards it. Wolsey watched their movements keenly, and strove that English interests should not be entirely sacrificed in the pacification which seemed imminent. He strove to induce Charles to allow proposals of peace to proceed from England, which should arbitrate on the differences between him and Francis. He urged that in any negotiations which Charles himself undertook he was bound to consider how Henry could be recompensed for his losses. Moreover, he secretly opened up negotiations of his own with the French Court, and used the imperial alliance as a means to heighten England's value to France.

The more Wolsey watched events the more he became convinced that the best thing was to make a

separate peace with France, yet in such a way as to avoid an open breach with the Emperor. There were other reasons besides the failure of military expeditions, and the distrust in any good result from their continuance, which impelled Wolsey to a pacific policy. He knew only too well that war was impossible, and that the country could not bear the continued drain on its resources. If Henry VII. had developed the royal power by a parsimony which enabled him to be free from parliamentary control, Henry VIII. had dazzled his people by the splendour of royalty, and had displayed his magnificence to such an extent that Englishmen were beginning to doubt if they could afford much longer to be so important, or rather if England's importance in Continental affairs were worth all the money that it cost. Of late years the weight of taxation had become oppressive, and the expenses of the last campaign were difficult to meet.

There was no difference between the national revenue and the royal revenue in Wolsey's days. The king took all the money he could get, and spent it as he thought good; if he went to war he expected his people to pay for it. In an ordinary way the king was well provided for by his feudal dues and the proceeds of customs, tonnage and poundage, and the tax on wool, wool-fells, and leather. When extraordinary expenses were incurred Parliament was summoned, and granted taxes to the king. Their vote was reckoned on an old assessment of tenths and fifteenths of the value of chattels possessed by the baronage and the commons; and when Parliament made this grant the clergy in their convocation granted a tenth of clerical incomes. The value of

a tenth and fifteenth was £30,000 ; of a clerical tenth £10,000 ; so that the usual grant in case of an emergency amounted to £40,000 from the whole realm. For his expedition of 1513 Henry obtained a vote of two tenths and fifteenths, besides a subsidy of a graduated income and property tax which was estimated to produce £160,000, and this had to be supplemented by a further grant of tenths and fifteenths in 1515.

It was in 1515 that Wolsey became Chancellor, and with that office assumed the entire responsibility for all affairs of state. He managed to introduce some order into the finances, and during the years of pacific diplomacy things went tolerably well. But the French expeditions were costly, and in April 1523 Parliament had to be summoned to pay the king's debts. The war against France was popular, and men were willing to contribute.

So on 15th April Henry VIII. opened Parliament, and Tunstal, Bishop of London, delivered the usual oration in praise of the king and grief over the evils of the time. The Commons departed, and elected as their Speaker Sir Thomas More, who had already abandoned the quiet paths of literature for the stormy sea of politics. The king's assent was given in the usual manner to his appointment, and the session was adjourned. The Commons doubtless began to take financial matters under their consideration, but it was thought desirable that they should have a definite statement of the national needs. On 29th April Wolsey went to the House, and after urging the importance of the interests at stake in the war, proposed a subsidy of £800,000, to be raised according to an old method, by a tax of four

shillings in the pound on all goods and lands. Next day there was much debate on this proposal: it was urged that the sudden withdrawal of so large an amount of ready money would seriously affect the currency, and was indeed almost impossible. A committee was appointed to represent to Wolsey that this was the sense of the House, and beg him to induce the king to moderate his demands. Wolsey answered that he would rather have his tongue pulled out with red-hot pincers than carry such a message to the king.

The Commons in a melancholy mood renewed their debate till Wolsey entered the House and desired to reason with those who opposed his demands. On this Sir Thomas More, as Speaker, defended the privilege of the House by saying, "That it was the order of that House to hear and not to reason save among themselves." Whereupon Wolsey was obliged to content himself with answering such objections as had come to his ear. He argued, it would seem with vigour, that the country was much richer than they thought, and he told them some unpleasant truths, which came with ill grace from himself, about the prevalence of luxury. After his departure the debate continued till the House agreed to grant two shillings in the pound on all incomes of £20 a year and upwards; one shilling on all between £20 and £2; and fourpence on all incomes under £2; this payment to be extended over two years. This was increased by a county member, who said, "Let us gentlemen of £50 a year and upwards give the king of our lands a shilling in the pound, to be paid in two years." The borough members stood aloof, and allowed the landholders to tax themselves an extra

shilling in the pound if they chose to do so. This was voted on 21st May, and Parliament was prorogued till 10th June. Meanwhile popular feeling was greatly moved by rumours of an unprecedented tax, and what was really done was grossly exaggerated on all sides. As the members left the House an angry crowd greeted them with jeers. "We hear say that you will grant four shillings in the pound. Do so, and go home, we advise you." Really the members had done the best they could, and worse things were in store for them. For when the session was resumed the knights of the shire showed some resentment that they had been allowed to outdo the burgesses in liberality. They proposed that as they had agreed to pay a shilling in the pound on land assessed over £50 in the third year, so a like payment should be made in the fourth year on all goods over the value of £50. There was a stormy debate on this motion; but Sir Thomas More at length made peace, and it was passed. Thus Wolsey, on the whole, had contrived to obtain something resembling his original proposal, but the payments were spread over a period of four years. After this Wolsey, at the prorogation of Parliament, could afford to thank the Commons on the king's behalf, and assure them that "his Grace would in such wise employ their loving contribution as should be for the defence of his realm and of his subjects, and the persecution and pressing of his enemy."

Yet, however Wolsey might rejoice in his success, he knew that he had received a serious warning, which he was bound to lay to heart. He had been faithful to the king, and had done his best to carry out his views.

The war with France was none of his advising, and he had no hopes of any advantage from it ; yet he was willing to take all the blame of measures which inwardly he disapproved. He stood forward and assumed the unpopularity of taxation, whose necessity he deplored. Henry spent the nation's money at his pleasure, and Wolsey undertook the ungrateful task of squeezing supplies from a reluctant Parliament, while the king sat a benevolent spectator in the background. Henry took all the glory, and left Wolsey to do all the unpleasant work. Wolsey stood between the national temper and the king ; he felt that he could not stand under the odium of accomplishing many more such reconciliations. England had reached the limit of its aspirations after national glory. For the future Wolsey must maintain the king's honour without appealing to the national pocket.

There was no prospect of obtaining further supplies from Parliament, and the best way to pay the expenses of a futile war was by making a lucrative peace. Wolsey tried to induce Francis I. to renew his financial agreement with Henry VIII. which the war had broken off ; and to bring pressure to bear upon him for this purpose, was willing to continue with Charles V. negotiations for a fresh undertaking.

So in June the unwearied Pace was sent to Bourbon's camp to promise England's help on terms which Wolsey knew were sure to be refused. England would again join in a campaign against France in the north, provided Bourbon, by an invasion of Provence, succeeded in raising a rebellion against Francis I., and would take an oath of allegiance to the English king as lord of France. Bour-

bon sorely needed money, and did all he could to win over Pace. He secretly took an oath of fidelity, not of allegiance; and Pace was impressed with admiration of his genius and believed in his chances of success. Wolsey was coldly cautious towards Pace's enthusiasm, and the result was a breach between them. Pace openly blamed Wolsey, as Wingfield had done before, and pressed for money and an armed demonstration. Wolsey soberly rebuked his lack of judgment by setting before him a well-considered survey of the political chances. His caution proved to be justified, as Bourbon's invasion of Provence was a failure. Wolsey gained all that he needed by his pretence of helping Bourbon; he induced the French Court to undertake negotiations seriously by means of secret envoys who were sent to London.

Still Wolsey did not hide from himself the difficulties in the way of an alliance with France which would satisfy Henry VIII. or bring substantial advantage to the country. However, on one point he managed to obtain an immediate advantage. He always kept his eye on Scotland, and now used the first signs of returning friendliness on the part of France to further his scheme of restoring English influence in that country. In June the Duke of Albany was recalled to France, and Wolsey set to work to win back Queen Margaret to her brother's cause. He seems to have despaired of blandishments, and contrived a way to have a more powerful weapon. Margaret's husband, the Earl of Angus, had been sent by Albany to France, where he was carefully guarded. On the first signs of renewed friendliness between England and France a hint from Wolsey procured him an opportunity of

escaping to England. With Angus at his disposal Wolsey urged Margaret to be reconciled to her husband, and terrified her by the prospect of alternately restoring him to Scotland. By playing cleverly on her personal feelings, Wolsey led her by degrees to accept his own plan for freeing Scotland from Albany and French interference. He urged that the young king was now old enough to rule for himself, and promised Margaret help to secure her supremacy in his council. At the same time he won over the Scottish lords by the prospect of a marriage between James and Mary of England, who was still Henry VIII.'s heir. In August James V. was set up as king, and the Scottish Parliament approved of the English marriage. Again Wolsey won a signal triumph, and accomplished by diplomacy what the sword had been unable to achieve.

We need not follow the complicated diplomacy of the year 1524, which was transferred to Italy, whither Francis I. had pursued Bourbon and was engaged in the siege of Pavia. It is enough to say that Wolsey pursued a cautious course: if Francis won the day in Italy he was ready to treat with him liberally: if the imperial arms prevailed, then he could sell England's alliance more dearly. But this cautious attitude was displeasing to Charles, whose ambassador in London, De Praet, complained without ceasing of the growing coldness of Henry and Wolsey. Wolsey kept a sharp watch on De Praet, and resented his keen-sightedness; finally, in February 1525, De Praet's despatches were intercepted, and he was called before the Council, when Wolsey charged him with untruth. De Praet answered by complaining that his privileges as an ambassador had

been violated. He was ordered to confine himself to his own house till the king had written to the Emperor about his conduct.

This was indeed an unheard-of treatment for the ambassador of an ally, and we can scarcely attribute it merely to personal spite on the part of so skilled a statesman as Wolsey. Perhaps it was a deliberate plan to cause a personal breach between Henry and the Emperor. No doubt Henry's own feelings were towards Charles rather than Francis, and it seems probable that Wolsey wished to show his master that Charles was only trying to make use of his friendship for his own purposes. The despatches of Charles's envoy were opened and their contents made known to Henry for some time before Wolsey took any open action. He acted when he saw his master sufficiently irritated, and he probably suggested that the best way to give Charles a lesson was by an attack upon his ambassador. This proposal agreed with the high-handed manner of action which Henry loved to adopt. It gave him a chance of asserting his own conception of his dignity, and he challenged Charles to say if he identified himself with his ambassador's sentiments.

Under any circumstances it was an audacious step, and as things turned out it was an unfortunate one. Within a few days the news reached England that Francis had been attacked at Pavia by the imperial forces, had been entirely routed, and was a prisoner in the hands of Charles. Though Wolsey was prepared for some success of the imperial arms, he was taken aback at the decisiveness of the stroke. His time for widening the breach between Charles and Henry had not been well chosen.

However, Charles saw that he could not pursue his victory without money, and to obtain money he must adopt an appearance of moderation. So he professed in Italy willingness to forget the past, and he avoided a quarrel with England. He treated the insult to his ambassador as the result of a personal misunderstanding. Henry complained of De Praet's unfriendly bearing; Charles assured him that no offence was intended. Both parties saved their dignity: De Praet was recalled, and another ambassador was sent in his stead. Wolsey saw that he had been precipitate, and hastened to withdraw his false step: Henry lent him his countenance, but can scarcely have relished doing so. Wolsey knew that his difficulties were increased. The victory of Charles again drew Henry to his side and revived his projects of conquest at the expense of France, now left helpless by its king's captivity. As the defection of Bourbon had formerly awakened Henry's hopes, so now did the captivity of Francis. Again Wolsey's pacific plans were shattered; again he was driven to undertake the preparations for a war of which his judgment disapproved.

Indeed Wolsey knew that war was absolutely impossible for want of money; but it was useless to say so to the king. He was bound to try and raise supplies by some means or other, and his experience of the last Parliament had shown him that there was no more to be obtained from that source. In his extremity Wolsey undertook the responsibility of reviving a feudal obligation which had long been forgotten. He announced that the king purposed to pass the sea in person, and demanded that the goodwill of his subjects should provide

for his proper equipment. But the goodwill of the people was not allowed the privilege of spontaneous generosity. Commissioners were appointed in every shire to assess men's property, and require a sixth part of it for the king's needs. Wolsey himself addressed the citizens of London. When they gave a feeble assent to his request for advice, "whether they thought it convenient that the king should pass the sea with an army or not," he proceeded, "Then he must go like a prince, which cannot be without your aid." He unfolded his proposals for a grant of 3s. 4d. in the pound on £50 and upwards, 2s. 8d. on £20 and upwards, and 1s. in the pound on £1 and upwards. Some one pleaded that the times were bad. "Sirs," said Wolsey, "speak not to break what is concluded, for some shall not pay even a tenth; and it were better that a few should suffer indigence than the king at this time should lack. Beware, therefore, and resist not, nor ruffle not in this case; otherwise it may fortune to cost some their heads." This was indeed a high-handed way of dealing with a public meeting, which was only summoned to hear the full measure of the coming calamity. We cannot wonder that "all people cursed the cardinal and his adherents as subverters of the laws and liberty of England." Nor was Wolsey ignorant of the unpopularity which he incurred; but there was no escape possible. He rested only on the king's favour, and he knew that the king's personal affection for him had grown colder. He was no longer the king's friend and tutor, inspiring him with his own lofty ideas and slowly revealing his far-reaching schemes. Late years had seen Wolsey immersed in the business of the State, while the king pursued his own pleasures, sur-

rounded by companions who did their utmost to undermine Wolsey's influence. They advocated war, while he longed for peace; they encouraged the royal extravagance, while he worked for economy; they favoured the imperial alliance and humoured Henry's dreams of the conquest of France, while Wolsey saw that England's strength lay in a powerful neutrality. The king's plans had deviated from the lines which Wolsey had designed, and the king's arbitrary temper had grown more impatient of restraint. Wolsey had imperceptibly slipped from the position of a friend to that of a servant, and he was dimly conscious that his continuance in the royal service depended on his continued usefulness. Whatever the king required he was bound to provide.

So Wolsey strained every nerve to fill the royal coffers by the device of an "Amicable Loan," which raised a storm of popular indignation. Men said with truth that they had not yet paid the subsidy voted by Parliament, and already they were exposed to a new exaction. Coin had never been plentiful in England, and at that time it was exceptionally scarce. The commissioners in the different shires all reported the exceeding difficulty which they met with in the discharge of their unpleasant duty. It soon became clear to Wolsey that his demand had overshot the limits of prudence, and that money could not be raised on the basis of the parliamentary assessment without the risk of a rebellion. Accordingly Wolsey withdrew from his original proposal. He sent for the mayor and corporation of London and told them, in the fictitious language in which constitutional procedure is always veiled, "I kneeled down to his Grace, showing him both your good minds towards him and also

the charge you continually sustain, the which, at my desire and petition, was content to call in and abrogate the same commission." The attempt to raise money on the basis of each man's ratable value was abandoned, and the more usual method of a benevolence was substituted in its stead.

This, however, was not much more acceptable. Again Wolsey summoned the mayor and corporation; but they had now grown bolder, and pleaded that benevolences had been abolished by the statute of Richard III. Wolsey angrily answered that Richard was a usurper and a murderer of his nephews; how could his acts be good? "An it please your Grace," was the answer, "although he did evil, yet in his time were many good acts made not by him only, but by the consent of the body of the whole realm, which is Parliament." There was nothing more to be said, and Wolsey had to content himself with leaving every man to contribute privily what he would. It did not seem that this spontaneous liberality went far to replenish the royal exchequer.

What happened in London was repeated in different forms in various parts of England. In Norwich there was a tumult, which it needed the presence of the Duke of Norfolk to appease. He asked the confused assembly who was their captain, and bade that he should speak. Then out spake one John Greene, a man of fifty years. "My lord, since you ask who is our captain, forsooth, his name is Poverty; for he and his cousin Necessity have brought us to this doing. For all these persons and many more live not of ourselves, but we live by the substantial occupiers of this country; and yet they give

us so little wages for our workmanship that scarcely we be able to live ; and thus in penury we pass the time, we, our wives and children : and if they, by whom we live, be brought in that case that they of their little cannot help us to earn our living, then must we perish and die miserably. I speak this, my lord : the clothmakers have put away all their people, and a far greater number, from work. The husbandmen have put away their servants and given up household ; they say the king asketh so much that they be not able to do as they have done before this time, and then of necessity must we die wretchedly."

John Greene's speech expressed only too truly the condition of affairs in a period of social change. The old nobility had declined, and the old form of life founded on feudalism was slowly passing away. Trade was becoming more important than agriculture ; the growth of wool was more profitable than the growth of corn. It is true that England as a whole was growing richer, and that the standard of comfort was rising ; but there was a great displacement of labour, and consequent discontent. The towns had thriven at the expense of the country ; and in late years the war with France had hindered trade with the Netherlands. The custom duties had diminished, the drain of bullion for war expenses had crippled English commerce. There had been a succession of bad seasons, and every one had begun to diminish his establishment and look more carefully after his expenditure.

All this was well known to the Duke of Norfolk, and was laid before the king. The commissions were recalled, pardons were granted to the rioters, and the loan was

allowed to drop. But Wolsey had to bear all the odium of the unsuccessful attempt, while the king gained all the popularity of abandoning it. Yet Henry VIII. resented the failure, and was angry with Wolsey for exposing him to a rebuff. In spite of his efforts Wolsey was ceasing to be so useful as he had been before, and Henry began to criticise his minister. Brave and resolute as Wolsey was, his labours and disappointments began to tell upon him. Since the failure of the Conference of Calais he had been working not at the development of a policy which he approved, but at the uncongenial task of diminishing the dangers of a policy which he disapproved. The effects of this constant anxiety told upon his health and spirits, and still more upon his temper. He might be as able and as firm as ever, but he no longer had the same confidence in himself.

It was perhaps this feeling which led Wolsey to show the king the extremity of his desire to serve him by undertaking the desperate endeavour to wring more money from an exhausted people. Wolsey had done his utmost to satisfy the king; he had accepted without a murmur the burden of popular hatred which the attempt was sure to bring. There is a pathos in his words, reported by an unfriendly hand, addressed to the council: "Because every man layeth the burden from him, I am content to take it on me, and to endure the fume and noise of the people, for my goodwill towards the king, and comfort of you, my lords and other the king's councillors; but the eternal God knoweth all." Nor was it enough that he submitted to the storm; he wished to give the king a further proof of his devotion. Though others might withhold their substance, yet he

would not. He offered the king his house at Hampton Court, which he had built as his favourite retreat, and had adorned to suit his taste. It was indeed a royal gift, and Henry had no scruple in accepting it. But the offer seems to show an uneasy desire to draw closer a bond which had been gradually loosened, and renew an intimacy which was perceptibly diminishing.

However, in one way Wolsey had a right to feel satisfaction even in his ill-success. If money was not to be had, war was impossible, and Wolsey might now pursue his own policy and work for peace. He had to face the actual facts that England was allied to Charles, who had won a signal victory over Francis, and had in his hands a mighty hostage in the person of the King of France. His first object was to discover Charles V.'s intentions, and prevent him from using his advantage solely for his own profit. Bishop Tunstal and Sir Richard Wingfield were sent to Charles with orders to put on a bold face, and find whether Charles thought of dethroning Francis or releasing him for a ransom. In the first case, they were to offer military aid from England: in the second, they were to claim for England a large share in the concessions to be wrung out of Francis. The English demands were so exorbitant that though they may have satisfied the fantastic aspirations of Henry, Wolsey must have known them to be impossible. Under cover of a friendly proposal to Charles he was really preparing the way for a breach.

Charles on his side was engaged in playing a similar game. In spite of his success at Payia he was really helpless. He had no money, and the captivity of the French king awakened so much alarm in Europe that

he felt compelled to use his advantage moderately. As a first measure he needed money, and saw no chance of obtaining it save by marrying Isabella of Portugal, who would bring him a dowry of 1,000,000 golden crowns. For this purpose he must free himself from the engagement of the treaty of Windsor, by which he was betrothed to Mary of England. So he acted as Wolsey was acting. He professed a great desire to carry out his engagement as a means of getting rid of it, and sent ambassadors to ask that Mary and her dowry should be given up to him, with a further loan of 200,000 ducats.

The two embassies had crossed on the way, and Henry received Charles's communication as an answer to his demands. In this way it served Wolsey's purpose admirably, for it showed clearly enough that the interests of Henry and Charles were not the same. Charles was bent upon pursuing his own advantage, and was still willing to use Henry as a useful ally; but Henry saw nothing to be gained from the alliance, and the time had come when some tangible gain was to be secured from all his expenditure. Hitherto he had been personally on Charles's side, but in his conferences with the imperial envoys in the month of June he made it clear that his patience was exhausted. Henceforth he accepted Wolsey's views of peace with France. If Charles was striving to make what he could out of the captivity of the French king, then England might as well join in the scramble. The misfortune of France was England's opportunity. If Charles was not willing to share his gains with Henry, then Henry must pick up what he could for himself. It was an unwelcome conclusion for Charles, who hoped to bring the pressure of

irresistible necessity to bear on his captive. If England also joined in the bidding its competition would run down his price.

Moreover, this resolution of Henry made a great change in his domestic relations. Queen Katharine was devoted to her nephew's interests, and had exercised considerable influence over her husband. They talked together about politics, and Henry liked to move amidst acquiescent admiration. All that was now at an end, as Katharine could not change her sympathies, and had not the tact to disguise her disapprobation. From this time forward Henry did not treat her with the affection and familiarity which had been his wont, and when he made up his mind he did not scruple to emphasise his decision by his acts. He had not been a faithful husband, but hitherto his infidelity had not been a cause of domestic discord. He had an illegitimate son, Henry Fitzroy, by Elizabeth Blunt, one of the Queen's ladies-in-waiting; and on 15th June he created this boy of six years old Duke of Richmond. This he did with a display of pomp and ceremony which must have been very offensive to the Queen; nor was the offence diminished when, a month afterwards, the boy was created Lord High Admiral of England. Such an act was, to say the least, a taunt to Katharine that she had borne no son; it was a public proclamation of the king's disappointment and discontent with his matrimonial lot. The luckless Katharine could make no complaint, and was forced to submit to the king's will; but we cannot doubt that she put down to Wolsey what was not his due, and that Wolsey had to bear the hatred of her friends for the king's change of policy, and all that flowed from it.

However, Wolsey's course was now clearly to dissolve the imperial alliance without causing a breach. For this purpose he used Charles's desire for his Portuguese marriage. He offered to release Charles from his engagement to Mary on condition that the treaty was annulled, that he paid his debts to Henry, and concluded a peace with France to England's satisfaction. Charles refused to take any step so decided, and the negotiations proceeded. But Wolsey's attention was not so much directed to Charles as to France, where Louise, the king's mother, was desperately striving to procure her son's release. In their dealings with France there was a keen rivalry between England and the Emperor, which should succeed in making terms soonest. In this competition Wolsey had one advantage; he had already learned the stubbornness of the national spirit of France, and its willingness to submit to anything rather than territorial loss. So, while Charles haggled for provinces, Wolsey demanded money. He told the French envoys that in order to make peace, without having won laurels to justify it, Henry could not take less than 2,000,000 crowns, and he would hear of no abatement. There was much discussion of all the old claims of England for compensation from France, but Wolsey knew the necessity of the moment, and carried all his points.

When the terms were agreed upon there was another discussion about the security to be given. Francis was a prisoner in Spain, and though his mother was regent, a doubt might be thrown upon her capacity to ratify such an important treaty. Wolsey would admit no doubts in the matter. He knew that peace with France would not be popular, but he was determined that his master

should see its advantage in the substantial form of ready money with good security for its payment. Besides ratification by the regent he demanded the personal security of several French nobles, of towns and local estates. At length he was satisfied. The treaty was signed on 30th August, and was published on 6th September. Henry was to receive 2,000,000 crowns in annual instalments of 50,000; the treaty included Scotland as an ally of France, and it was stipulated that the Duke of Albany was not to return. Scotland, left unprotected, was bound to follow France, and in January 1526 peace was signed with Scotland to the satisfaction of both countries.

Wolsey could congratulate himself on the result of his work. Again he had won for England a strong position, by setting her in the forefront of the opposition to the overweening power of the empire. Again had England's action done much to restore the equilibrium of Europe. This had been achieved solely by Wolsey's diplomacy. Charles V. had received a blow which he could neither parry nor resent. The French treaty with England deprived Charles of the means of exercising irresistible pressure upon Francis, and encouraged the Italian States to form an alliance against the Emperor. Francis, weary of his long captivity, signed the treaty of Madrid, and obtained his freedom in February 1526. But he previously protested against it as extorted by violence, and refused to surrender an inch of French territory notwithstanding his promises. Charles gained little by his victory at Pavia. His hands were again full, as the Turks invaded Hungary, and Francis joined the Italian League against him. He still had

every motive to keep on good terms with England, and Wolsey had no desire to precipitate a breach.

So Wolsey's policy for the future was one of caution and reserve. The king withdrew more and more from public affairs, and spent his time in hunting. His relations with Katharine became day by day more irksome, and he tried to forget his domestic life by leading a life of pleasure. Wolsey strove to hold the balance between Charles and Francis without unduly inclining to either side. Both wished to be on good terms with England, for neither was free from anxiety. The sons of Francis were hostages in Spain, and Charles was hampered by the opposition of the Italian League. Of this League Henry VIII. was a member, but he declined to give it any active support. The Italians, as usual, were divided, and Clement VII. was not the man to direct their distracted councils successfully. In September 1526 a small force of Spaniards, aided by a party amongst the Roman barons, surprised Rome, sacked the papal palace, and filled Clement with terror. Charles V. disavowed any share in this attack, and excused himself before Henry's remonstrances. But as Clement did not entirely amend his ways, the experiment was repeated on a larger scale. In May 1527 the imperial troops under the Duke of Bourbon and the German general George Frundsberg captured and plundered Rome, and took the Pope prisoner. This unwonted deed filled Europe with horror. It seemed as if the Emperor had joined the enemies of the Church.

During this period Wolsey had been cautiously drawing nearer to France. At first he only contemplated strengthening the ties which bound the two countries

together; but in the beginning of 1527 he was willing to form a close alliance with France, which must lead to a breach with the Emperor. French commissioners came to London, and a proposal was made that Francis should marry Mary, then a child of ten, though he was betrothed to the Emperor's sister Eleanor. Wolsey's demands were high: a perpetual peace between the two countries, a perpetual pension of 50,000 crowns to the English king, a tribute of salt, and the surrender of Boulogne and Ardres. In the course of the discussion the son of Francis, the Duke of Orleans, was substituted for the father as Mary's husband; on all other points Wolsey had his will, and never did he show himself a more consummate master of diplomacy. The treaty was signed on 30th April. The debts of Charles were transferred to Francis, and Wolsey could show that he had made a substantial gain.

Doubtless Wolsey intended that this peace with France should form the basis of a universal peace, which he never ceased to pursue. The success of Charles V. in Italy, and subsequent events at home, rapidly dispelled his hopes. Already the selfwill of Henry VIII. had driven him to consent to measures which were against his judgment; the same selfwill, turned to domestic and personal affairs, was already threatening to involve Wolsey in a matter whose far-reaching effects no man could foresee.

CHAPTER VIII

WOLSEY'S DOMESTIC POLICY

WE have been following the laborious career of Wolsey in his direction of foreign affairs. He held in his hands the threads of complicated negotiations, by which he was endeavouring to assure England's power on the Continent, not by means of war but by skilful diplomacy. In doing this he had to guard the commercial relations of England with the Netherlands, and had also to bow before the selfwill of the king, who insisted on pursuing fantastic designs of personal aggrandisement. Still he steered a careful course amidst many difficulties, though when he looked back upon his labours of thirteen years he must have owned to serious disappointment. Perhaps he sometimes asked himself the question, if foreign policy was worthy of the best attention of an English minister, if he had not erred in adventuring on such large schemes abroad. There was much to do at home; many useful measures of reform awaited only a convenient season. He had hoped, when first he began his course, to have seen England long before this time peaceful and powerful, the arbiter of European affairs, a pattern to other kingdoms, dealing

honestly and sagaciously with the pressing needs of the time. He had laboured incessantly for that end, but it was as far off as ever. The year 1527 saw England exhausted by useless wars, and Europe plunged in irreconcilable strife. Wolsey's dream of a united Europe, cautiously moved by England's moderating counsels, had vanished before forces which he could not control.

Meanwhile domestic reforms had been thrust into the background. Wolsey was keenly alive to their importance, and had a distinct policy which he wished to carry out. He had carefully gathered into his hands the power which would enable him to act, but he could not find the time for definite action. Something he contrived to do, so as to prepare the way for more ; but his schemes were never revealed in their entirety, though he trained the men who afterwards carried them out, though in a crude and brutal shape.

England was passing through a period of social change which necessitated a re-adjustment of old institutions. The decay of feudalism in the Wars of the Roses had been little noticed, but its results had been profound. In the sphere of government the check exercised by the barons on the Crown was destroyed. Henry VII. carefully depressed the baronage and spared the pockets of the people, who were willing to have the conduct of affairs in the hands of the king so long as he kept order and guarded the commercial interests, which were more and more absorbing national energies. The nation wished for a strong government to put down anarchy and maintain order ; but the nation was not willing to bear the cost of a strong government on constitutional principles. Henry VII. soon found that he might do what

he liked provided he did not ask for money ; he might raise supplies by unconstitutional exactions on individuals provided he did not embarrass the bulk of the middle classes, who were busied with trade. The nobles, the rich landowners, the wealthy merchants, were left to the king's mercies ; so long as the pockets of the commons were spared they troubled themselves no further.

Henry VII. recognised this condition of national feeling, and pursued a policy of levelling class privileges and cautiously heeding the popular interests ; by these means he established the royal power on a strong basis, and carried on his government through capable officials, who took their instructions from himself. Some of the old nobles held office, but they gradually were reduced to the same level as the other officials with whom they consorted. The power of the old nobility passed silently away.

With this political change a social change corresponded. The barons of former years were great in proportion to the number of their retainers and the strength of their castles. Now retainers were put down by the Star Chamber ; and the feudal lord was turned into the country gentleman. Land changed hands rapidly ; opulent merchants possessed themselves of estates. The face of the country began to wear a new look, for the new landlords did not desire a numerous tenantry but a large income. The great trade of England was wool, which was exported to Flanders. Tillage lands were thrown into pasture ; small holders found it more difficult to live on their holdings ; complaints were heard that the country was being depopulated. England was slowly passing through an economic change which

involved a displacement of population, and consequent misery on the labouring classes. No doubt there was a great increase in national prosperity : but prosperity was not universally diffused at once, and men were keenly conscious of present difficulties. Beneath the surface of society there was a widespread feeling of discontent.

Moreover, amongst thinking men a new spirit was beginning to prevail. In Italy this new spirit was manifest by quickened curiosity about the world and life, and found its expression in a study of classical antiquity. Curiosity soon led to criticism ; and before the new criticism the old ideas on which the intellectual life of the Middle Ages was built were slowly passing away. Rhetoric took the place of logic, and the study of the classics superseded the study of theology. This movement of thought slowly found its way to England, where it began to influence the higher minds.

Thus England was going through a crisis politically, socially, and intellectually, when Wolsey undertook the management of affairs. This crisis was not acute, and did not call for immediate measures of direction ; but Wolsey was aware of its existence, and had his own plans for the future. We must regret that he put foreign policy in the first place, and reserved his constructive measures for domestic affairs. The time seemed ripe for great achievements abroad, and Wolsey was hopeful of success. He may be pardoned for his lofty aspirations, for if he had succeeded England would have led the way in a deliberate settlement of many questions which concerned the wellbeing of the whole of Christendom. But success eluded Wolsey's grasp, and he fell from power before he had time to trace decidedly the

lines on which England might settle her problems for herself; and when the solution came it was strangely entangled in the personal questions which led to Wolsey's fall from power. Yet even here we may doubt if the measures of the English Reformation would have been possible if Wolsey's mind had not inspired the king and the nation with a heightened consciousness of England's power and dignity. Wolsey's diplomacy at least tore away all illusions about Pope and Emperor, and the opinion of Europe, and taught Henry VIII. the measure of his own strength.

It was impossible that Wolsey's powerful hand should not leave its impression upon everything which it touched. If Henry VIII. inherited a strong monarchy, Wolsey made the basis of monarchical power still stronger. It was natural that he should do so, as he owed his own position entirely to the royal favour. But never had any king so devoted a servant as had Henry VIII., in Wolsey; and this devotion was not entirely due to motives of selfish calculation or to personal attraction. Wolsey saw in the royal power the only possible means of holding England together and guiding it through the dangers of impending change. In his eyes the king and the king alone could collect and give expression to the national will. England itself was unconscious of its capacities, and was heedless about the future. The nobles, so far as they had any policy, were only desirous to win back their old position. The Church was no longer the inspirer of popular aspirations or the bulwark of popular freedom. Its riches were regarded with a jealous eye by the middle classes, who were busied with trade; the defects of its organisation had been deplored

by its most spiritually-minded sons for a century ; its practices, if not its tenets, awakened the ridicule of men of intelligence ; its revenues supplied the king with officials more than they supplied the country with faithful pastors : its leaders were content to look to the king for patronage and protection. The traders of the towns and the new landlords of the country appreciated the growth of their fortunes in a period of internal quiet, and dreaded anything that might bring back discord. The labouring classes felt that redress of their grievances was more possible from a far-off king than from landlords who, in their eyes, were bent upon extortion. Every class looked to the king, and was confident in his good intentions. We cannot wonder that Wolsey saw in the royal power the only possible instrument strong enough to work reforms, and set himself with goodwill to make that instrument efficacious.

So Wolsey was in no sense a constitutional minister, nor did he pay much heed to constitutional forms. Parliament was only summoned once during the time that he was in office, and then he tried to browbeat Parliament and set aside its privileges. In his view the only function of Parliament was to grant money for the king's needs. The king should say how much he needed, and Parliament ought only to advise how this sum might most conveniently be raised. We have seen that Wolsey failed in his attempt to convert Parliament into a submissive instrument of royal despotism. He underestimated the strength of constitutional forms and the influence of precedent. Parliament was willing to do its utmost to meet the wishes of the king, but it would not submit to Wolsey's high handed dictation. The

habits of diplomacy had impaired Wolsey's sagacity in other fields ; he had been so busy in managing emperors and kings that he had forgotten how to deal with his fellow-countrymen. He was unwise in his attempt to force the king's will upon Parliament as an unchangeable law of its action. Henry VIII. looked on and learned from Wolsey's failure, and when he took the management of Parliament into his own hands he showed himself a consummate master of that craft. His skill in this direction has scarcely been sufficiently estimated, and his success has been put down to the servility of Parliament. But Parliament was by no means servile under Wolsey's overbearing treatment. If it was subservient to Henry the reason is to be found in his excellent tactics. He conciliated different interests at different times ; he mixed the redress of acknowledged grievances with the assertion of far-reaching claims ; he decked out selfish motives in fair-sounding language ; he led men on step by step till they were insensibly pledged to measures more drastic than they approved ; he kept the threads of his policy in his own hands till the only escape from utter confusion was an implicit confidence in his wisdom ; he made it almost impossible for those who were dissatisfied to find a point on which they could establish a principle for resistance. He was so skilful that Parliament at last gave him even the power over the purse, and Henry, without raising a murmur, imposed taxes which Wolsey would not have dared to suggest. It is impossible not to feel that Henry, perhaps taught in some degree by Cromwell, understood the temper of the English people far better than Wolsey ever did. He established the royal power on a broader

and securer basis than Wolsey could have erected. Where Wolsey would have made the Crown independent of Parliament, Henry VIII. reduced Parliament to be a willing instrument of the royal will. Wolsey would have subverted the constitution, or at least would have reduced it to a lifeless form; Henry VIII. so worked the constitutional machinery that it became an additional source of power to his monarchy.

But though Wolsey was not successful in his method of making the royal power supreme over Parliament, he took the blame of failure upon himself, and saved the king's popularity. Wolsey's devotion to his master was complete, and cannot be assigned purely to selfish motives. Wolsey felt that his opinions, his policy, his aspirations had been formed through his intercourse with the king; and he was only strong when he and his master were thoroughly at one. At first the two men had been in complete agreement, and it cost Wolsey many a pang when he found that Henry did not entirely agree with his conclusions. After the imperial alliance was made Wolsey lost much of his brilliancy, his dash, and his force. This was not the result of age, or fatigue, or hopelessness so much as of the feeling that he and the king were no longer in accord. Like many other strong men, Wolsey was sensitive. He did not care for popularity, but he felt the need of being understood and trusted. He gave the king his affection, and he craved for a return. There was no one else who could understand him or appreciate his aims, and when he felt that he was valued for his usefulness rather than trusted for what he was in himself, the spring of his life's energy was gone.

Still Wolsey laboured in all things to exalt the royal power, for in it he saw the only hope of the future, and England endorsed his opinion. But Wolsey was too great a man to descend to servility, and Henry always treated him with respect. In fact Wolsey always behaved with a strong sense of his personal dignity, and carried stickling for decorum to the verge of punctiliousness. Doubtless he had a decided taste for splendour and magnificence, but it is scarcely fair to put this down to the arrogance of an upstart, as was done by his English contemporaries. Wolsey believed in the influence of outward display on the popular mind, and did his utmost to throw over the king a veil of unapproachable grandeur and unimpeachable rectitude. He took upon himself the burden of the king's responsibilities, and stood forward to shield him against the danger of losing the confidence of his people. As the king's representative he assumed a royal state; he wished men to see that they were governed from above, and he strove to accustom them to the pomp of power. In his missions abroad, and in his interviews with foreign ambassadors, he was still more punctilious than in the matters of domestic government. If the king was always to be regarded as the king, Wolsey, as the mouthpiece of the royal will, never abated his claims to honour only less than royal; but he acted not so much from self-assertion as from policy. At home and abroad equally the greatness of the royal power was to be unmistakably set forth, and ostentation was an element in the game of brag to which a spirited foreign policy inevitably degenerates. It was for the king's sake that Wolsey magnified himself; he never assumed an independent position, but all his

triumphs were loyally laid at the king's feet. In this point, again, Wolsey overshot the mark, and did not understand the English people, who were not impressed in the manner which he intended. When Henry took the government more directly into his own hands he managed better for himself, for he knew how to identify the royal will with the aspirations of the people, and clothed his despotism with the appearance of paternal solicitude. He made the people think that he lived for them, and that their interests were his, whereas Wolsey endeavoured to convince the people that the king alone could guard their interests, and that their only course was to put entire confidence in him. Henry saw that men were easier to cajole than to convince; he worked for no system of royal authority, but contented himself with establishing his own will. In spite of the disadvantage of a royal education, Henry was a more thorough Englishman than Wolsey, though Wolsey sprang from the people.

It was Wolsey's teaching, however, that prepared Henry for his task. The king who could use a minister like Wolsey and then throw him away when he was no longer useful, felt that there was no limitation to his self-sufficiency.

Wolsey, indeed, was a minister in a sense which had never been seen in England before, for he held in his hand the chief power alike in Church and State. Not only was he chancellor, but also Archbishop of York, and endowed besides with special legatine powers. These powers were not coveted merely for purposes of show: Wolsey intended to use them, when opportunity offered, as a means of bringing the Church under the royal power as

completely as he wished to subject the State. He had little respect for the ecclesiastical organisation as such ; he saw its obvious weaknesses, and wished to provide a remedy. If he was a candidate for the Papacy, it was from no desire to pursue an ecclesiastical policy of his own, but to make the papal power subservient to England's interests. He was sufficiently clear-sighted to perceive that national aspirations could not much longer be repressed by the high-sounding claims of the Papacy ; he saw that the system of the Church must be adapted to the conditions of the time, and he wished to avert a revolution by a quiet process of steady and reasonable reform. He was perhaps honest in saying that he was not greatly anxious for the Papacy ; for he knew that England gave him ample scope for his energies, and he hoped that the example of England would spread throughout Europe. So at the beginning of his career he pressed for legatine powers, which were grudgingly granted by Leo X., first for one year, and afterwards for five ; till the gratitude of Clement VII. conferred them for life. Clothed with this authority, and working in concert with the king, Wolsey was supreme over the English Church, and perhaps dreamed of a future in which the Roman Pontiff would practically resign his claims over the northern churches to an English delegate, who might become his equal or superior in actual power.

However this might be, he certainly contemplated the reform of the English Church by means of a judicious mixture of royal and ecclesiastical authority. Everything was propitious for such an undertaking, as the position of the Church was felt to be in many ways anomalous and antiquated. The rising middle class had

many grievances to complain of from the ecclesiastical courts; the new landlords looked with contempt on the management of monastic estates; the new learning mocked at the ignorance of the clergy, and scoffed at the superstitions of a simpler past which had survived unduly into an age when criticism was coming into fashion. The power of the Church had been great in days when the State was rude and the clergy were the natural leaders of men. Now the State was powerful and enjoyed men's confidence; they looked to the king to satisfy their material aspirations, and the Church had not been very successful in keeping their spiritual aspirations alive. It was not that men were opposed to the Church, but they judged its privileges to be excessive, its disciplinary courts to be vexatious, its officials to be too numerous, and its wealth to be devoted to purposes which had ceased to be of the first importance. There was a general desire to see a re-adjustment of many matters in which the Church was concerned; and before this popular sentiment churchmen found it difficult to assert their old pretensions, and preferred to rest contentedly under the protection of the Crown.

A trivial incident shows the general condition of affairs with sufficient clearness. One of the claims which on the whole the clergy had maintained was the right of trial before ecclesiastical courts; and the greater leniency of ecclesiastical sentences had been a useful modification of the severity of the criminal law, so that benefit of clergy had been permitted to receive large extension of interpretation. Further, the sanctity of holy places had been permitted to give rights of sanctuary to criminals fleeing from justice or revenge.

Both of these expedients had been useful in a rude state of society, and had done much to uphold a higher standard of humanity. But it was clear that they were only temporary expedients which were needless and even harmful as society grew more settled and justice was regularly administered. Henry VII. had felt the need of diminishing the rights of sanctuary, which gave a dangerous immunity to the numerous rebels against whom he had to contend, and he obtained a bull for that purpose from Pope Innocent VIII. The example which he set was speedily followed, and an Act was passed by the Parliament of 1511, doing away with sanctuary and benefit of clergy in the case of those who were accused of murder.

It does not seem that the Act met with any decided opposition at the time that it was passed; but there were still sticklers for clerical immunities, who regarded it as a dangerous innovation, and during the session of Parliament in 1515 the Abbot of Winchcombe preached a sermon in which he denounced it as an impious measure. Henry VIII. adopted a course which afterwards stood him in good stead in dealing with the Church; he submitted the question to a commission of divines and temporal peers. In the course of the discussion Standish, the Warden of the Friars Minors, put the point clearly and sensibly by saying, "The Act was not against the liberty of the Church, for it was passed for the weal of the whole realm." The clerical party were not prepared to face so direct an issue, and answered that it was contrary to the decretals. "So," replied Standish, "is the non-residence of bishops; yet that is common enough." Baffled in their appeal to law the bishops fell

back upon Scripture, and quoted the text, "Touch not mine anointed." Again Standish turned against them the new critical spirit, which destroyed the old arguments founded on isolated texts. David, he said, used these words of all God's people as opposed to the heathen ; as England was a Christian country the text covered the laity as well as the clergy. It was doubtless galling to the clerical party to be so remorselessly defeated by one of their own number, and their indignation was increased when the temporal lords on the commission decided against the Abbot of Winchcombe and ordered him to apologise.

The bishops vented their anger on Standish, and summoned him to answer for his conduct before Convocation, whereon he appealed to the king. Again Henry appointed a commission, this time exclusively of laymen, to decide between Standish and his accusers. They reported that Convocation, by its proceeding against one who was acting as a royal commissioner, had incurred the penalties of *premunire*, and they added that the king could, if he chose, hold a parliament without the lords spiritual, who had no place therein save by virtue of their temporal possessions. Probably this was intended as a significant hint to the spirituality that they had better not interfere unduly with parliamentary proceedings. Moreover, at the same time a case had occurred which stirred popular feeling against the ecclesiastical courts. A London merchant had been arrested by the chancellor of the Bishop of London on a charge of heresy, and a few days after his arrest was found hanging dead in his cell. Doubtless the unhappy man had committed suicide, but there was a suspicion that

his arrest was due to a private grudge on the part of the chancellor, who was accused of having made away with him privily. Popular feeling waxed high, and the lords who gave their decision so roundly against Convocation knew that they were sure of popular support.

Henry was not sorry of an opportunity of teaching the clergy their dependence upon himself, and he summoned the bishops before him that he might read them a lesson. Wolsey's action on this occasion is noticeable. He seems to have been the only one who saw the gravity of the situation, and he strove to effect a dignified compromise. Before the king could speak Wolsey knelt before him and interceded for the clergy. He said that they had designed nothing against the king's prerogative, but thought it their duty to uphold the rights of the Church; he prayed that the matter might be referred to the decision of the Pope. Henry answered that he was satisfied with the arguments of Standish. Fox, Bishop of Winchester, turned angrily on Standish, and Archbishop Warham plucked up his courage so far as to say feebly, "Many holy men have resisted the law of England on this point and have suffered martyrdom." But Henry knew that he had not to deal with a second Becket, and that the days of Becket had gone by for ever. He would have nothing to say to papal intervention or to clerical privilege; the time had come for the assertion of royal authority, and Henry could use his opportunity as skilfully as the most skilful priest. "We," said he, "are by God's grace king of England, and have no superior but God; we will maintain the rights of the Crown like our predecessors; your decrees you break and interpret at your pleasure :

but we will not consent to your interpretation any more than our predecessors have done." The immemorial rights of the English Crown were vaguer and more formidable than the rights of the Church, and the bishops retired in silence. Henry did not forget the service rendered him by Standish, who was made Bishop of St. Asaph in 1518.

In this incident we have a forecast of the subsequent course of events—the threat of *præmunire*, the assertion of the royal supremacy, the submission of the clergy. Nothing was wanting save a sufficient motive to work a revolution in the ancient relations between Church and State. Wolsey alone seems to have seen how precarious was the existing position of the Church. He knew that the Church was wrong, and that it would have to give way, but he wished to clothe its submission with a semblance of dignity, and to use the papal power, not as a means of guarding the rights of the Church, but as a means of casting an air of ecclesiastical propriety over their abandonment. Doubtless he proposed to use his legatine power for that purpose if the need arose; but he was loyal to the Church as an institution, and did not wish it to fall unreservedly to the tender mercies of the king. He saw that this was only to be avoided by a judicious pliancy on the Church's part, which could gain a breathing-space for carrying out gradual reforms.

The fact that Wolsey was a statesman rather than an ecclesiastic gave him a clear view of the direction which a conservative reformation should pursue. He saw that the Church was too wealthy and too powerful for the work which it was actually doing. The wealth and power of the Church were a heritage from a former age,

in which the care for the higher interests of society fell entirely into the hands of the Church because the State was rude and barbarous, and had no machinery save for the discharge of rudimentary duties. Bishops were the only officials who could curb the lawlessness of feudal lords; the clergy were the only refuge from local tyranny; monks were the only landlords who cleared the forests, drained the marshes, and taught the pursuits of peace; monastery schools educated the sons of peasants, and the universities gave young men of ability a career. All the humanitarian duties of society were discharged by the Church, and the Church had grown in wealth and importance because of its readiness to discharge them. But as the State grew stronger, and as the power of Parliament increased, it was natural that duties which had once been delegated should be assumed by the community at large. It was equally natural that institutions which had once been useful should outlast their usefulness and be regarded with a jealous eye. By the end of the reign of Edward I. England had been provided with as many monastic institutions as it needed, and the character of monasticism began to decline. Benefactions for social purposes from that time forward were mainly devoted to colleges, hospitals, and schools. The fact that so many great churchmen were royal ministers shows how the energy of the Church was placed at the disposal of the State and was by it absorbed. The Church possessed revenues, and a staff of officials which were too large for the time, in which it was not the only worker in the field of social welfare. It possessed rights and privileges which were necessary for its protection in days of anarchy and

lawlessness, but which were invidious in days of more settled government. Moreover, the tenure of so much land by ecclesiastical corporations like monasteries, was viewed with jealousy in a time when commercial competition was becoming a dominant motive in a society which had ceased to be mainly warlike.

From this point of view Wolsey was prepared for gradual changes in the position of the Church; but he did not wish those changes to be revolutionary, nor did he wish them to be made by the power of the State. He knew the real weakness of the Church and the practical omnipotence of the king; but he hoped to unite the interests of the Crown and of the Church by his own personal influence and by his position as the trusted minister of king and Pope alike.

He did not, however, deceive himself about the practical difficulties in the way of a conservative reform, which should remove the causes of popular discontent, and leave the Church an integral part of the State organisation. He knew that the ecclesiastical system, even in its manifest abuses, was closely interwoven with English society, and he knew the strength of clerical conservatism. He knew also the dangers which beset the Church if it came across the royal will and pleasure. If any reform were to be carried out it must be by raising the standard of clerical intelligence. Already many things which had accorded with the simpler minds of an earlier age had become objects of mockery to educated laymen. The raillery of Erasmus at the relics of St. Thomas of Canterbury and the Virgin's milk preserved at Walsingham expressed the difference which had arisen between the old practices of religion and the belief of

thoughtful men. It would be well to divert some of the revenues of the Church from the maintenance of idle and ignorant monks to the education of a body of learned clergy.

This diversion of monastic property had long been projected and attempted. William of Wykeham endowed his New College at Oxford with lands which he purchased from monasteries. Henry VI. endowed Eton and King's College with revenues which came from the suppression of alien priories. In 1497 John Alcock, Bishop of Ely, obtained leave to suppress the decrepit nunnery of St. Rhadegund in Cambridge and use its site for the foundation of Jesus College. Wolsey only carried farther and made more definite the example which had previously been set when in 1524 he obtained from Pope Clement VII. permission to convert into a college the monastery of St. Frideswyde in Oxford. Soon after he obtained a bull allowing him to suppress monasteries with fewer than seven inmates, and devote their revenues to educational purposes.

Nor was Wolsey the only man who was of opinion that the days of monasticism were numbered. In 1515 Bishop Fox of Winchester contemplated the foundation of a college at Oxford in connection with the monastery of St. Swithin at Winchester. He was dissuaded from making his college dependent on a monastery by his brother bishop, Oldham of Exeter, who said, "Shall we build houses and provide livelihoods for a company of bussing monks, whose end and fall we ourselves may live to see? No, no: it is meet to provide for the increase of learning, and for such as by learning shall do good to Church and commonwealth." Oldham's advice

prevailed, and the statutes of Fox's college of Brasenose were marked by the influence of the new learning as distinct from the old theology.

Still Wolsey's bull for the wholesale dissolution of small monasteries was the beginning of a process which did not cease till all were swept away. It introduced a principle of measuring the utility of old institutions and judging their right to exist by their power of rendering service to the community. Religious houses whose shrunken revenues could not support more than seven monks, according to the rising standard of monastic comfort, were scarcely likely to maintain serious discipline or pursue any lofty end. But it was the very reasonableness of this method of judgment which rendered it exceedingly dangerous. Tried by this standard, who could hope to escape? Fuller scarcely exaggerates when he says that this measure of Wolsey's "made all the forest of religious foundations in England to shake, justly fearing that the king would fell the oaks when the cardinal had begun to cut the underwood." It would perhaps have required too much wisdom for the monks to see that submission to the cardinal's pruning-knife was the only means of averting the clang of the royal axe.

The method which Wolsey pursued was afterwards borrowed by Henry VIII. Commissioners were sent out to inquire into the condition of small monasteries, and after an unfavourable report their dissolution was required, and their members were removed to a larger house. The work was one which needed care and dexterity as well as a good knowledge of business. Wolsey was lucky in his agents, chief amongst whom

was Thomas Cromwell, an attorney whose cleverness Wolsey quickly perceived. In fact most of the men who so cleverly managed the dissolution of the monasteries for Henry had learned the knack under Wolsey, who was fated to train up instruments for purposes which he would have abhorred.

The immediate objects to which Wolsey devoted the money which he obtained by the dissolution of these useless monasteries were a college in his old university of Oxford and another in his native town of Ipswich. The two were doubtless intended to be in connection with one another, after the model of William of Wykeham's foundations at Winchester and Oxford, and those of Henry VI. at Eton and Cambridge. This scheme was never carried out in its integrity, for on Wolsey's fall his works were not completed, and were involved in his forfeiture. Few things gave him more grief than the threatened check of this memorial of his greatness, and owing to his earnest entreaties his college at Oxford was spared and was refounded. Its name, however, was changed from Cardinal College to Christ Church, and it was not entirely identified with Wolsey's glory. The college at Ipswich fell into abeyance.

Wolsey's design for Cardinal College was on a magnificent scale. He devised a large court surrounded by a cloister, with a spacious dining-hall on one side. The hall was the first building which he took in hand, and this fact is significant of his idea of academic life. He conceived a college as an organic society of men living in common, and by their intercourse generating and expressing a powerful body of opinion. Contemporaries mocked and said, "A fine piece of business; this car-

dinal projected a college and has built a tavern." They did not understand that Wolsey was not merely adding to the number of Oxford colleges, but was creating a society which should dominate the University, and be the centre of a new intellectual movement. For this purpose Wolsey devised a foundation which should be at once ecclesiastical and civil, and should set forward his own conception of the relations between the Church and the intellectual and social life of the nation. His foundation consisted of a dean, sixty canons, six professors, forty petty canons, twelve chaplains, twelve clerks, and sixteen choristers; and he proposed to fill it with men of his own choice, who would find there a fitting sphere for their energies.

Wolsey was a man well adapted to hold the balance between the old and the new learning. He had been trained in the theology of the schools, and was a student of St. Thomas Aquinas; but he had learned by the training of life to understand the new ideas; he grasped their importance, and he foresaw their triumph. He was a friend of the band of English scholars who brought to Oxford the study of Greek, and he sympathised with the intellectual aspirations of Grocyn, Colet, More, and Erasmus. Perhaps he rather sympathised than understood; but his influence was cast on their side when the opposition to the new learning broke out in the University and the Trojans waged a desperate and at first a successful war against the Greeks. The more ignorant among the clerical teachers objected to any widening of the old studies, and resented the substitution of biblical or patristic theology for the study of the schoolmen. They dreaded the effects of the critical method, and were

not reassured when Grocyn, in a sermon at St. Paul's Cathedral, declared that the writings attributed to Dionysius the Areopagite were spurious. A wave of obscurantism swept over Oxford, and, as Tyndale puts it, "the barking curs, Dun's disciples, the children of darkness, raged in every pulpit against Greek, Latin, and Hebrew." Wolsey used the king's authority to rebuke the assailants of learning; but the new teachers withdrew from Oxford, and Wolsey saw that if the new learning was to make way it must have a secure footing. Accordingly he set himself to get the universities into his power, and in 1517 proposed to found university lectureships in Oxford. Hitherto the teaching given in the universities had been voluntary; teachers arose and maintained themselves by a process of natural selection. Excellent as such a system may seem, it did not lead to progress, and already the Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond, Henry VII.'s mother, had adopted the advice of Bishop Fisher, and founded divinity professorships in the two universities. Wolsey wished to extend this system and organise an entire staff of teachers for university purposes. We do not know how far he showed his intention, but such was his influence that Oxford submitted its statutes to him for revision. Wolsey's hands were too full of other work for him to undertake at once so delicate a matter; but he meant undoubtedly to reorganise the system of university education, and for this purpose prevailed on Cambridge also to entrust its statutes to his hands. Again he had prepared the way for a great undertaking, and had dexterously used his position to remove all obstacles, and prepare a field for the work of reconstruction. Again he was

prevented from carrying out his designs, and his educational reform was never actually made. We can only trace his intentions in the fact that he brought to Oxford a learned Spaniard, Juan Luis Vives, to lecture on rhetoric, and we may infer that he intended to provide both universities with a staff of teachers chosen from the first scholars of Europe.

Another matter gives another indication of Wolsey's desire to remove the grievances felt against the Church. If the monasteries were survivals of a time when the Church discharged the humanitarian duties of society, the ecclesiastical courts were in a like manner survivals of a time when the civil courts were not yet able to deal with many points which concerned the relations between man and man, or which regulated individual conduct. Thus marriage was a religious ceremony, and all questions which arose from the marriage contract were decided in the ecclesiastical courts. Similarly wills were recognised by the Church, as resting on the moral basis of mutual confidence, long before the State was prepared to acknowledge their validity. Besides these cases which arose from contract, the Church exercised a disciplinary supervision over its members for the good of their souls, and to avoid scandals in a Christian community. On all these points the principles of the Church had leavened the conceptions of the State, and the civil jurisdiction had in many matters overtaken the ecclesiastical. But the clerical courts stood stubbornly upon their claim to greater antiquity, and the activity of ecclesiastical lawyers found plenty of work to do. Disciplinary jurisdiction was unduly extended by a class of trained officials, and was resented by the growing inde-

pendence of the rising middle class. No doubt the ecclesiastical courts needed reform, but the difficulties in the way of reforming legal procedure are always great. Wolsey faced the problem in a way which is most characteristic of his statesmanship. He strove to bring the question to maturity for solution by getting the control of the ecclesiastical courts into his own hands. For this purpose he used his exceptional position as Papal Legate, and instituted a legatine court which should supersede the ordinary jurisdiction. Naturally enough this brought him into collision with Archbishop Warham, and his fall prevented him from developing his policy. His attempt only left the ecclesiastical courts in worse confusion, and added to the strength of the opposition, which soon robbed them of most of their powers. It added also to Wolsey's unpopularity, and gave a shadow of justice to the unworthy means which were used for his destruction.

In fact, wherever we look, we see that in domestic affairs Wolsey had a clear conception of the objects to be immediately pursued by a conservative reformer. But a conservative reformer raises as much hostility as does a revolutionist, for the mass of men are not sufficiently foreseeing or sufficiently disinterested willingly to abandon profitable abuses. They feel less animosity against the open enemy who aims avowedly at their destruction, than against the seeming friends who would deprive them of what they consider to be their rights. The clergy submitted more readily to the abolition of their privileges by the king than they would have submitted to a reform at the hands of Wolsey. They could understand the one; they could not understand the other.

This was natural, for Wolsey had no lofty principles to set before them ; he had only the wisdom of a keen-sighted statesman, who read the signs of the times. Indeed he did not waste his time in trying to persuade others to see with his eyes. He could not have ventured to speak out and say that the Church must choose between the tender mercies of the royal power and submission to the discretion of one who, standing between the king and the Pope, was prepared to throw a semblance of ecclesiastical recognition over reforms which were inevitable. It is clear that Wolsey was working for the one possible compromise, and he hoped to effect it by his own dexterity. Secure of the royal favour, secure through his political importance of the papal acquiescence in the use which he made of his legatine power, standing forward as the chief ecclesiastic in England, he aimed at accomplishing such reforms as would have brought into harmony the relations between Church and State. He did not hope to do this by persuasion, but by power, and had taken steps to lay his hand cautiously on different parts of the ecclesiastical organisation. With this idea before him we may safely acquit Wolsey of any undue ambition for the papal office ; he doubted whether his influence would be increased or not by its possession.

In everything that Wolsey did he played for the highest stakes, and risked all upon the hope of ultimate success. He trusted to justify himself in the long-run, and was heedless of the opposition which he called forth. Resting solely upon the royal favour, he did not try to conciliate, nor did he pause to explain. Men could not understand his ends, but they profoundly disliked his means. The suppression of small monasteries, which

might be useless but served to provide for younger sons or dependants of country families, was very unpopular, as coming from a cardinal who enjoyed the revenues of many ecclesiastical offices whose duties he did not discharge. The setting up of a legatine court was hateful to the national sentiment of Englishmen, who saw in it only another engine of ecclesiastical oppression. The pomp and magnificence wherewith Wolsey asserted a greatness which he mainly valued as a means of doing his country service, was resented as the vulgar arrogance of an upstart. Wolsey's ideas were too great to pay any heed to the prejudices of Englishmen which, after all, have determined the success of all English ministers, and which no English statesman has ever been powerful enough to disregard.

CHAPTER IX

THE KING'S DIVORCE

1527-1529

IF Wolsey hoped that the peace with France, which he had so successfully concluded in the beginning of 1527, would enable him to reassert England's influence on the Continent, and would give him an opportunity for the work of domestic reform, he was sorely disappointed. A new matter arose, not entirely unexpected, but which widened into unexpected issues, and consumed Wolsey's energies till it led to his fall. The project of the king's divorce was suddenly mooted; and this personal matter, before it was ripe for settlement, gradually drew into its sphere all the questions concerning England's foreign and domestic policy which Wolsey's statesmanship had been trying to solve by wise and well-considered means. Wolsey had been gathering into his hands the threads of a complicated policy, each one of which required dexterous handling, in accordance with a great design. He found himself suddenly called upon to act precipitately for the accomplishment of a small matter, which brought all the difficulties of his position prominently forward, and gave him no time for that skilful diplomacy in

which he excelled. Moreover, when the project was started neither Henry nor Wolsey could have foreseen the complications which would arise ; still less could Wolsey have known the obstinacy which the faintest opposition to the royal will would develop in the king, or the extent to which he could persuade himself that the satisfaction of the royal pleasure was the sole purpose of the existence of the power of the State. At first Henry had sympathised with Wolsey's far-reaching schemes. Latterly he had at all events been willing to allow Wolsey to have his own way on the whole. The time came when he showed himself a hard taskmaster, and demanded that Wolsey should at all costs satisfy his personal desires in a matter which he persuaded himself was all-important to the nation at large.

Viewed according to the general notions of the time, there was nothing very surprising in the fact that Henry VIII. should wish for a divorce. Royal marriages were made and unmade from motives of expediency ; it was only a question of obtaining a decent plea. The sons of Katharine had died in infancy, and Mary was the only heir of the English throne ; it was a matter of importance to the future of England that the succession to the throne should be clearly established. If Henry had remained attached to his wife this consideration would not have been put forward ; but Henry was never famed for constancy. He was in the prime of life, while Katharine was over forty. He had developed in character, not for the better, while she remained true to the narrow traditions of her early training. She was an excellent housewife, conscientious, decorous, and capable ; but she was devoted to the political interests of Spain,

and admired her nephew Charles. While the imperial alliance was warmly pursued by Henry she was happy; when Henry's zeal for Charles began to fade she felt offended, and was not judicious in the display of her political bias. Henry was more and more annoyed by his wife's discontent, and the breach between them rapidly widened. When Henry broke with Charles and allied himself with France he seems to have felt that his domestic peace was at an end, and he was not the man to shrink from the effort to re-establish it upon another basis.

Perhaps none of these considerations would have moved Henry to take prompt action if his desires had not been kindled by a new object of his affection. He had not been a faithful husband, and Katharine seems to have been indulgent to his infidelities. In the course of 1526 he was captivated by the charms of Anne Boleyn, as he had formerly been captivated by her sister Mary. But Anne had learned that the king was fickle, and she resolved that she would not be so easily won as to be lightly abandoned. She skilfully managed to make herself agreeable to the king till his passion for her became so violent that he was prepared to accept her terms and make her his lawful wife.

Wolsey was not in favour of this plan; but he was not opposed to getting rid of the political influence of Katharine, and he believed that the king's fancy for Anne Boleyn would rapidly pass away. Whatever his own personal opinion might be, he did not venture to gainsay the king in a matter on which he was resolved, and he lent himself to be an instrument in a matter which involved him in measures which became more and

more discreditable. The first idea of the king was to declare his marriage with Katharine unlawful, on the ground that she had previously been his brother's wife ; but he was cognisant of that when he married her and had applied for a papal dispensation to remedy that source of invalidity. Doubtless some plea might be discovered to enable the Pope to set aside the dispensation granted by his predecessor. But whatever technical grounds might be used to justify the Pope's decision in the king's favour, the Pope could not be expected to act in such a manner as to offend the Powers of Europe and shock the moral sense of Englishmen. Wolsey did not hide from himself that there were three hindrances in the way of legalising the king's divorce. The opinion of England was not in its favour ; Charles V. was likely to resent the affront which it would put upon his aunt, and the Pope could not afford to alienate one who was becoming all-powerful in Italy that he might win the distant friendship of the English king ; Francis I. had just made a treaty with Henry VIII., by which the hand of Mary had been promised to his son, and he was not likely to wish to see Mary declared to be illegitimate. These were serious elements of opposition, which it would require considerable skill to overcome.

The first measure which suggested itself to Henry and Wolsey was to put the king's plea into shape, and endorse it with the authority of the English Church. For this purpose a suit was secretly instituted against the king in Wolsey's legatine court. Henry was solemnly informed that a complaint had been made to Wolsey, as censor of public morals, that he had cohabited for eighteen years with his brother's wife. Henry consented

• that Archbishop Warham should be joined with Wolsey as assessor, and named a proctor who should plead his cause. Three sessions of this court were held with the profoundest secrecy in May; but in spite of all the attempts at secrecy the imperial ambassador discovered what was going on. The object of this procedure seems to have been to produce a sentence from the legate's court in England which should be confirmed by the Pope without right of appeal. If the Pope had been a free agent he might conceivably have adopted this course; but the news soon reached England that Rome had been sacked by Bourbon, and that the Pope was trembling before Charles V. In this turn of affairs it was useless to proceed farther on the supposition that he would unhesitatingly comply with the wishes of Henry and Wolsey. A court sitting in secret would have no influence on English opinion, and Wolsey proposed that its sittings should be suspended, and the opinions of the English bishops be taken as a means of educating public opinion.

But Katharine had been informed of the king's intentions concerning her, and showed a purpose of defending her rights. It would be very awkward if she were the first to make the matter public, and were to appeal to the Pope or her kinsman Charles. The question would then become a political question, and Henry was not prepared with allies. So on 22d June the king broached his difficulties to Katharine. He told her of his scruples, and of his intentions of submitting them to the decision of canonists and theologians; meanwhile they had better live apart. Katharine burst into tears, and the king vaguely tried to assure her that all was being done

for the best, and begged her to keep the matter secret. His only object was to prevent her from taking any open steps till he had assured himself of the countenance of the French king to his plans. For this purpose Wolsey was sent on an embassy, ostensibly to settle some questions raised by the French treaty, really to concert with Francis I. a scheme for bringing to bear upon the Pope a pressure which should be strong enough to counteract the influence of Charles V. So, on 3d July, Wolsey left London on his last diplomatic mission. Men who saw Wolsey set out with more than his accustomed state, escorted by nine hundred horsemen, thought, doubtless, that the cardinal's greatness was as high as ever; but those who watched more closely saw him in the splendid ceremonial of the Church of Canterbury "weep very tenderly," for his mind was ill at ease. He must have felt that he was going to use his talents for a bad end, and that all patriotism and nobility had vanished from his aim. On his way to Dover he had a conference with Archbishop Warham, whom he instructed about the conduct to be observed towards the queen. Then at Rochester he sounded Bishop Fisher, the most holy and upright of the English bishops, who had already been asked by Katharine to give her counsel, though she had not ventured to tell him what was the subject on which she wished for his advice. So Wolsey told his own story; that the king's conscience was disquiet, and that he wished to have his scruples set at rest by the opinions of learned men. He represented that Katharine by her hastiness was throwing difficulties in the way of the king's considerate procedure, and threatened to publish the matter, and so create an open

scandal. Fisher believed Wolsey's tale, and was beguiled into a belief of the king's good intentions, which the queen could not understand. About the validity of Henry's marriage Wolsey could not get from Fisher an opinion contrary to the authority of a papal dispensation; but he contrived to alienate Fisher from sympathy with Katharine, and so left the queen without a friend while he proceeded to machinate against her in France.

We have from one of Wolsey's attendants, George Cavendish, his gentleman-usher, a full account of Wolsey's journey in France. On one point he gives us valuable insight into Wolsey's character where Wolsey has been much misrepresented. He tells us how at Calais he summoned his attendants and addressed them about their behaviour. He explained that the services which he required from them were not personal but official, and his words were those of a statesman who understood, but did not over-estimate, the value of external things. "Ye shall understand," he said, "that the king's majesty, upon certain weighty considerations, hath for the more advancement of his royal dignity assigned me in this journey to be his lieutenant-general, and what reverence belongeth to the same I will tell you. That for my part I must, by virtue of my commission of lieutenantship, assume and take upon me, in all honours and degrees, to have all such service and reverence as to his highness's presence is meet and due, and nothing thereof to be neglected or omitted by me that to his royal estate is appurtenant. And for my part, ye shall see me that I will not omit one jot thereof." Then he added some wise advice

about the courtesies to be observed in their intercourse with the French.

When matters of etiquette had thus been arranged, Wolsey rode out of Calais on 22d July, and pursued his journey to Abbeville, where he awaited the arrival of Francis I. at Amiens. On 4th August he entered Amiens, and was received with royal honours. His interviews with Francis and the queen-mother were most satisfactory on matters of general policy: the English alliance was firmly accepted, and all questions between the two Crowns were in a fair way towards settlement. Wolsey waited till the political alliance was firmly established before he broached the personal matter of the divorce. Meanwhile he meditated on the schemes which might be pursued by the allied kings to satisfy Henry's desires. He proposed that they should join in demanding from Charles V. that he should restore the Pope's independence, in the hope that the Pope when freed from constraint would be willing to show his gratitude by complying with Henry's demands. If they failed in procuring the Pope's release, they should declare the papal power to be in abeyance, and summon the cardinals to meet at Avignon, where, under Wolsey's presidency, they should transact such business as the Pope in his captivity was unable to discharge.

Either of these methods was technically decorous; but they did not much commend themselves to Henry VIII., whose passion for Anne Boleyn daily increased, and who was impatient of any procedure that involved delay. So Henry listened coldly to Wolsey's proposals for a "sure, honourable, and safe" termination of the "king's matter," as the divorce was now called: he

wished for a "good and brief conclusion," and gave ear to the advice of Anne Boleyn and her friends. It was easy for them to point out that Wolsey was an old-fashioned statesman, full of prejudice where the Church was concerned. They urged that the king could do better for himself, and could deal more expeditiously with the Pope than could a churchman who was bound to adopt a humble attitude towards his ecclesiastical superior. So Henry determined to take the matter into his own hands, and send his secretary Knight to negotiate with the Pope without Wolsey's intervention.

Wolsey, meanwhile, in ignorance of the King's intentions, but distressed at the difficulties which he foresaw, followed the French Court to Compiègne, where he divided his time between diplomatic conflicts, festivities, and the despatch of business. One morning, Cavendish tells us, "He rose early about four of the clock, sitting down to write letters into England unto the king, commanding one of his chaplains to prepare him to mass, insomuch that the said chaplain stood revested until four of the clock at afternoon; all which season my lord never rose once even to eat any meat, but continually wrote his letters, with his own hands, having all that time his nightcap and kerchief on his head. And about the hour of four of the clock, at afternoon, he made an end of writing, and commanded one Christopher Gunner, the king's servant, to prepare him without delay to ride empost into England with his letters, whom he despatched away or ever he drank. And that done he went to mass, and said his other divine service with his chaplain, as he was accustomed to do; and then went straight into a garden; and after he had walked

the space of an hour or more, and said his evensong, he went to dinner and supper all at once; and making a small repast, he went to his bed, to take his rest for the night."

While Wolsey was thus labouring in this thorny matter, he received a visit from Knight on his way to Rome. Knight's instructions were to demand from the Pope a dispensation for Henry to marry again before the divorce from Katharine had been pronounced; failing this, to marry immediately after his marriage with Katharine was declared invalid. Further, he was to ask the Pope to issue a bull delegating his spiritual authority to Cardinal Wolsey during his captivity. No doubt this was an expeditious way to cut existing difficulties; but it was too expeditious to suit the traditions of the Papal Court. Its obvious clumsiness showed that it was not the work of Wolsey's hand; and it was unwise for the king to inform the Pope that he was trying to act without Wolsey's knowledge.

Though Wolsey was left in ignorance of the nature of Knight's instructions, he could not but suspect that the king was acting without his full knowledge. He finished his work at Compiegne and returned to England at the end of September. He at once repaired to the Court at Richmond, and sent to tell the king of his arrival. Hitherto the king had always retired to a private room when he received the cardinal alone. Now Anne Boleyn was with the king in the great hall, and scarcely had Wolsey's message been delivered than she broke in, "Where else should the cardinal come than here where the king is?" The king confirmed her command, and Wolsey found himself ushered

into the hall, where Henry sat amusing himself with Anne and his favourites. Serious talk was out of the question. Wolsey was no longer first in the king's confidence. He went away feeling that Anne Boleyn was his political rival, whom he could only overcome by serving better than she could serve herself. Henceforth he had two masters instead of one, and he did not deceive himself that the continuance of his power depended solely on his usefulness in the matter of the divorce.

As Wolsey showed himself compliant, Anne Boleyn treated him graciously while she waited to hear the result of Knight's mission to Rome. It was not easy for him to enter the city, which was in possession of the Spaniards, and when he entered it he could not hold any personal communication with Clement VII., who was shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo. On 9th December Clement escaped to Orvieto, where Knight soon joined him, and showed his incapacity for the work which had been confided to him by revealing to the papal officials the whole details of the matter, which he ought to have kept secret. Clement saw at once the value of Henry's conscientious scruples, and learned that he was moved solely by a desire to marry Anne Boleyn, a connection which could not be excused by any paramount reasons of political expediency. However anxious the Pope might be to oblige the English king, there were limits to his complacency, and Knight had not the wits to cast a fair appearance over a disgraceful matter. Yet Clement did not wish to offend Henry by refusing his request at once. The demand for a dispensation empowering the king to marry at once had already been dropped at Wolsey's instance. Knight carried

with him a form of dispensation allowing Henry to marry as soon as his marriage with Katharine was dissolved. This form was amended by one of the cardinals, and was signed by the Pope. Knight started back to England, convinced that he had done his business excellently, and was bearing to the king the permission which he desired.

When the documents were placed in Wolsey's hands he saw at once that they were worthless. What Henry wanted was permission for Wolsey to decide the question in the Pope's behalf, and permission for himself to act at once as soon as Wolsey's decision was pronounced. The documents which he received did not bar Katharine's right of appeal; consequently Wolsey's decision would be of no effect, and the king could not lawfully marry again pending the appeal. In fact, the Pope reserved the entire decision of the matter in his own hand.

It was a small matter for Wolsey to triumph over a man like Knight; but Knight's failure showed Henry and Anne Boleyn that they must put their confidence in Wolsey after all. So in February 1528 Wolsey had to begin again from the beginning, and had to undo the mischief which Knight's bungling had made. He chose as his agents his secretary, Stephen Gardiner, and Edward Foxe, one of the king's chaplains. They were instructed to ask that the Pope would join with Wolsey some special legate, and give them power to pronounce a final judgment. For this purpose they were to plead Henry's cause with all earnestness, and say that the king was moved only by the scruples of his conscience; at the same time they were to praise the virtues of Anne

Boleyn, and say that the king was solely moved by considerations of his duty to his country in his desire to marry her. Further, they were to insist on the dishonour which would be done to the Holy See if the Pope, through fear of Charles V., were to refuse to do justice. If the king could not obtain justice from the Pope he would be compelled to seek it elsewhere, and live outside the laws of Holy Church; and however reluctant, he would be driven to this for the quiet of his conscience.

Truly these pleas were sorely contradictory. Henry was ready to acknowledge to the fullest extent the papal power of granting dispensations, and was ready to submit to the justice of the Pope as the highest justice upon earth. But this was solely on condition that the Pope gave decision according to his wishes. He regarded the Papacy as an excellent institution so long as it was on his own side. If it refused to see the justice of his pleas, then he fell back as strenuously as did Luther on the necessity of satisfying his own conscience, and to do so he was ready, if need were, to break with the Church. Truly the movement in Germany had affected public opinion more than was supposed when Wolsey could hold such language to the Pope. He did not know what a terrible reality that curious conscience of Henry would become. His words were a truer prophecy than he dreamed.

However, this line of argument was stubbornly pursued by Gardiner even in the Pope's presence. Clement at Orvieto was not surrounded by the pomp and splendour customary to his office. The English envoys found him in a little room, seated on a wooden bench

which was covered with "an old coverlet not worth twenty pence." But he did not see his way to a restoration of his dignity by an unhesitating compliance with the demands of the English king; on the other hand, the mere fact that his fortunes had sunk so low demanded greater circumspection. He was not likely to escape from dependence on Charles V. by making himself the tool of Francis I. and Henry VIII.; such a proceeding would only lead to the entire destruction of the papal authority. Its restoration must be achieved by holding the balance between the opposing Powers of Europe, and Henry VIII.'s desire for a divorce gave the Pope an opportunity of showing that he was still a personage of some importance. Dynastic questions still depended on his decree, and he could use Henry's application as a means of showing Charles that he had something to fear from the Papacy, and that it was his policy to make the Papacy friendly to himself. So Clement resolved to adopt a congenial course of temporising, in the hope that he might see his advantage in some turn of affairs. No doubt he thought that Henry's matter would soon settle itself; either his passion for Anne Boleyn would pass away, or he would make her his mistress. The stubbornness of Henry, his strange hold upon formal morality while pursuing an immoral course of conduct, his imperious self-will, which grew by opposition—these were incalculable elements which might have upset the plans of wiser men than Clement VII.

So the Pope acted the part of the good simple man who wishes to do what is right. He lamented his own ignorance, and proposed to consult those who were more learned in canon law than himself. When Gardiner

said that England asked nothing but justice, and if it were refused would be driven to think that God had taken away from the Holy See the key of knowledge, and would begin to adopt the opinion of those who thought that pontifical laws, which were not clear to the Pope himself, might well be committed to the flames, Clement sighed, and suggested a compromise. Then he added, with a smile, that though canonists said "the Pope has all laws in the cabinet of his breast," yet God had not given him the key to open that cabinet; he could only consult his cardinals.

Gardiner's outspoken remonstrances were useless against one who pleaded an amiable incompetence. Against the churnings of Henry's conscience Clement set up the churnings of his own conscience, and no one could gainsay the Pope's right to a conscience as much as the English king. After pursuing this course during the month of March the Pope at length with sighs and tears devised a compromise, in which he feared that he had outstepped the bounds of discretion. He accepted one of the documents which the English envoys had brought, the permission for the king to marry whom he would as soon as his marriage with Katharine had been dissolved. He altered the terms of the other document, which provided for the appointment of a commission with plenary powers to pronounce on the validity of the king's marriage; he granted the commission, but did not give it plenary power; at the same time he chose as the commissioner who was to sit with Wolsey Cardinal Campeggio, who was the protector of England in the Papal Court, and who was rewarded for his services by holding the bishopric of Hereford. In this way he

showed every mark of goodwill to Henry short of acquiescing entirely in the procedure which he proposed ; but he kept the final decision of the matter in his own hands.

Gardiner was not wholly pleased with this result of his skill and firmness : after all his efforts to obtain a definite solution the Pope had managed to escape from giving any binding promise. Still, Foxe put a good face on Gardiner's exploits when he returned to England in the end of April. Henry and Anne Boleyn were delighted, and Wolsey, though he was more dissatisfied than Gardiner, thought it best to be hopeful. He tried to bind the Pope more firmly, and instructed Gardiner to press that the law relating to Henry's case should be laid down in a papal decretal, so that the legates should only have to determine the question of fact ; this decretal he promised to keep entirely secret ; besides this, he urged that there should be no delay in sending Campeggio.

During these months of expectancy Wolsey condescended to ingratiate himself with Anne Boleyn, who had become a political personage of the first importance. Anne was sure of Wolsey's devotion to her interests so long as they were also the king's, and could not dispense with Wolsey's skill. So she was kindly, and wrote friendly letters to Wolsey, and asked for little gifts of tunny-fish and shrimps. The English Court again resembled an amiable family party, whose members were all of one mind. In the course of the summer they were all thrown into terror by an outbreak of the "Sweating Sickness," which devastated the country. Anne Boleyn was attacked, though not severely ; and Henry showed that his devotion to her

did not proceed to the length of risking his own precious life for her sake. He fled to Waltham, and Anne was left with her father; Henry protested by letter his unalterable affection, but kept out of harm's way till all risk of infection was past. At the same time he showed great solicitude for Wolsey's health, as did also Anne Boleyn. It seemed as though Wolsey were never more useful or more highly esteemed.

Yet, strangely enough, this outbreak of the plague drew upon Wolsey the most significant lesson which he had yet received of his own real position and of Henry's resoluteness to brook no check upon his royal will. Amongst others who perished in the sickness was the Abbess of Wilton, and Anne Boleyn wished that the vacant office should be given to one of the nuns of the abbey, Eleanor Carey, sister of William Carey, who had married Anne's sister Mary. Wolsey was informed of the wishes of Anne and of the king on this point; but on examination found that Eleanor's life and character were not such as to fit her for the office. He therefore proposed to confer it on the prioress, Isabella Jordan. It would seem, however, that Eleanor's friends were determined to efface in some degree the scandal which their unwise haste had occasioned, and they retaliated by spreading reports injurious to the character of the prioress. Wolsey did not believe these reports; but Anne Boleyn and the king agreed that if their nominee was to be set aside, the cardinal's nominee should be set aside likewise, and Wolsey was informed of the king's decision. Perhaps Wolsey failed to understand the secret motives which were at work; perhaps he had so far committed himself before receiving the king's mes-

sage that he could not well go back ; perhaps he conscientiously did what he thought right. Anyhow, he appointed Isabella Jordan, and sent her appointment to the king for confirmation ; further, he gave as his excuse that he had not understood the king's will in the matter.

To his extreme surprise and mortification the king took the opportunity thus afforded of reading him a lecture on his presumption, and reminding him that he was expected to render implicit obedience. Matters were no longer arranged between Henry and Wolsey alone ; Anne Boleyn was a third party, and the king's pride was engaged in showing her that his word was law. When Henry took his pen in hand he assumed the mantle of royal dignity, and he now gave Wolsey a sample of the royal way of putting things which was so effectual in his later dealings with his Parliament. He began by assuring Wolsey that the great love he bore him led him to apply the maxim, " Whom I love I chasten ;" he spoke therefore not in displeasure but for Wolsey's good. He could not but be displeased that Wolsey had acted contrary to his orders ; he was the more displeased that Wolsey had pleaded ignorance as an excuse for his disobedience. He overwhelmed him with quotations from his letters on the subject, and went on, " Ah, my lord, it is a double offence both to do ill and colour it too ; but with men that have wit it cannot be accepted so. Wherefore, good my lord, use no more that way with me, for there is no man living that more hateth it." He then went on to tell Wolsey that there were many rumours current about the means which he was employing to raise money from religious houses for the foundation of his new colleges ; he told him this because " I

dare be bolder with you than many that mumble it abroad." He showed that he had not forgotten the refusal of the monasteries to help in the Amicable Grant: why should they now give money to Wolsey unless they had some interested motive in doing so? He advised Wolsey to look closely into the matter, and ended, "I pray you, my lord, think not that it is upon any displeasure that I write this unto you. For surely it is for my discharge afore God, being in the room that I am in; and secondly, for the great zeal I bear unto you, not undeserved on your behalf. Wherefore, I pray you, take it so; and I assure you, your fault acknowledged, there shall remain in me no spark of displeasure; trusting hereafter you shall recompense that with a thing much more acceptable to me."

This letter came upon Wolsey as a sudden revelation of his true position. It showed him the reality of all the vague doubts and fears which he had for some time been striving to put from him. He was crushed into abjectness, which he did not even strive to conceal from others. He took the immediate matters of complaint seriously to heart, and wished to annul the appointment of Isabella Jordan, which the king ruled to be unnecessary; on that point he was satisfied with having asserted a principle. But he advised Wolsey to receive no more gifts for his colleges from religious houses, and Wolsey promised not to do so. "Thereby I trust, nor by any other thing hereafter unlawfully taken, your poor cardinal's conscience shall not be spotted, encumbered, or entangled; purposing, with God's help and your gracious favour, so to order the rest of my poor life that it shall appear to your Highness that I love and dread

God and also your Majesty." This was a lamentable prostration of the moral authority of the chief churchman in England before the king, and showed Wolsey's weakness. He knew that he had not demeaned himself as befitted his priestly office ; and though he may have felt that no man in England had less right than the king to reprove his conduct on moral grounds, still he could not plead that he was above reproach. In the particular matter of which he was accused—extorting money from the religious houses in return for immunities granted in virtue of his legatine power—there is no evidence that Wolsey was guilty. But he could not say that he had a conscience void of offence ; he had acted throughout his career as a statesman and a man of the world. If the king chose to hold him up to moral reprobation he had no valid defence to offer. He had disregarded the criticisms of others that he might serve the king more faithfully ; but if the king took upon himself the office of critic he had nothing to urge. It was because Henry had taken the measure of churchmen such as Wolsey that he ventured in later times to hold such lofty language in addressing the clergy. Henry was always superior to the weakness of imagining that his own conduct needed any defence, or his own motives any justification.

Wolsey, though forgiven with royal graciousness, was profoundly depressed, and could not recover his sense of security. The future was to him big with menaces, and perhaps he looked most sadly upon his designs which yet remained unrealised. He saw that his activity must henceforth work in a smaller sphere, and that he must make haste to finish what he had on hand. The ugly business of the divorce looked to him still uglier.

Either he would fail in his efforts to move the Pope, in which case he lost his hold upon the king at once, or, if he succeeded, he saw that the reign of Anne Boleyn meant the end of his own uncontested influence. The king's letter was at least significant of that : he would never have raised a question about so trivial a matter if he had not wished to justify his absolute power in the eyes of one who was to him all-important.

So Wolsey faced the future : he put his aspirations on a lower level, and wished only to garner certainly some of the fruits of his life-long labour. He told the French ambassador, Du Bellay, "that if God permitted him to see the hatred of these two nations (France and England) extinguished, and firm amity established, as he hopes it will shortly be, with a reform of the laws and customs of the country, such as he would effect if peace were made, and the succession of the kingdom assured, especially if this marriage took place, and an heir male were born of it, he would at once retire, and serve God for the rest of his life ; and that, without any doubt, on the first honourable occasion he could find, he would give up politics." Doubtless Wolsey was genuine in these utterances, and felt that he was resigning much when he reduced his designs within the limits which he here set forth. But limited as they were, they still contained an entire scheme for the reconstruction of English politics. Wolsey's plans remained complete, however much he might be willing to reduce them ; he was incapable of being a mere attendant upon chance.

For the present he was awaiting with growing anxiety the coming of Cardinal Campeggio, which was delayed, according to the Pope's policy of procrastination. First

the cardinal had to contend against the difficulties created by the disorderly state of Italy ; then he was delayed by an attack of the gout, which made his movements slow ; and he did not reach London till 8th October. When he came he was not prepared to act at once, nor did he treat Wolsey as an equal but rather as a subordinate in the work of the commission. In fact, Campeggio behaved as judge, and Wolsey as the king's advocate. Campeggio's instructions were first to try and persuade the king to lay aside his purpose of a divorce. He soon saw that this was useless, and Wolsey plainly warned him with prophetic instinct. "Most reverend lord, beware lest, in like manner as the greater part of Germany, owing to the harshness and severity of a certain cardinal, has become estranged from the Apostolic See and the faith, it should be said that another cardinal has given the same occasion to England, with the same result."

Failing to shake the king's determination, the next course which Campeggio was ordered to pursue was to persuade the queen to comply with the king's wishes. Katharine was still treated with outward respect, but was cut off from all friends and advisers, and subjected to a secret and galling persecution. Still she maintained a resolute spirit, and withstood the pleadings of Wolsey and Campeggio, who urged her to give way and withdraw to a monastery, for the quieting of the king's conscience. Katharine replied that there was nothing of which his conscience need be afraid, and that she intended "to live and die in the estate of matrimony to which God had called her." The obstinacy of Katharine was as invincible as the obstinacy of Henry ; and Katharine had right on her side.

Nothing remained save for the legates to proceed to the trial of the case; and in the trial Campeggio's instructions bade him procrastinate to the utmost in hopes the king might give way before the long delay. Wolsey had foreseen this possibility when he demanded that Campeggio should bring with him a decretal defining the law as applicable to the case. This decretal Campeggio was instructed to show the king, but keep in his own hands, so that it was useless for Wolsey's purpose. His first object was to get hold of this decretal, and he wrote urgently to the Pope asking that it should be delivered into the king's hands, and shown to the Privy Council. "Without the Pope's compliance," he sadly wrote, "I cannot bear up against this storm." But Clement VII. felt that he was more dependent on Charles V. than on Henry VIII., and declared that he had granted the decretal merely to be shown to the king and then burned; he had never consented that it be shown to the king's counsellors. When he was further pressed he tossed his arms and said, with great agitation, "I do consider the ruin that hangs over me: I repent what I have done. If heresies arise, is it my fault? My conscience acquits me. None of you have any reason to complain. I have performed my promise, and the king and the cardinal have never asked anything in my power which I have not granted with the utmost readiness; but I will do no violence to my conscience. Let them, if they like, send the legate back again, on the pretext that he will not proceed in the cause, and then do as they please, provided they do not make me responsible for injustice."

Here the Pope touched upon a noticeable feature of

the case. Henry was bound upon a course which was neither legally nor morally right, though national interests might to some degree be pleaded in its behalf. He was, however, resolved to be legally and morally justified in his own eyes and in the eyes of others. He would not content himself with setting aside the law, and leaving it to others to prove him in the wrong. The Papal Court was slow to justify him; it would have been slower to condemn him. Most men would have been satisfied with this knowledge, and would have acted upon it. But Henry was not only minded to do what he wished, but was resolved that what he wished should be declared absolutely right. He was determined that there should be no doubt about the legitimacy of his children by Anne Boleyn; and some recognition is due to him for not allowing his desires to overcome his patriotism, and leave to England the deplorable legacy of a disputed succession. As a man, Henry did not strive to subject his desires to the law of right; as a king, he was bent upon justifying his own caprice so that it should not do hurt to his royal office, or offend his duty to his kingdom. Henry sinned, but he was bent on sinning royally, and believed that so he could extenuate his sin.

Not only was Campeggio ordered not to part with the decretal, but he was bidden to destroy it. Meanwhile a new feature of the case emerged. It became known that, besides the bull of dispensation granted to Henry VII., an ampler brief had been issued in confirmation of it to Ferdinand of Spain, of which the original was contained in the Spanish archives. Henry VIII. insisted on its production, in the hopes of destroy-

ing it or casting doubts on its authenticity, and new negotiations were begun about this brief, which had the effect of wasting time and deferring the trial of the case. Further, on Clement VII.'s return to Rome in May he was attacked by illness, and his death was reported. Nothing could be done by the legates till they were assured of his recovery.

Meanwhile Henry was growing more and more impatient, and made it clear to Wolsey that if the proceedings did not lead to his divorce all the blame would be laid at Wolsey's door. Anne Boleyn also began to suspect Wolsey's good intentions towards herself, and thought that he was responsible for these repeated delays. Wolsey could no longer doubt that his all was staked on the issue of the trial, which at length began at Blackfriars on 18th June 1529. Katharine appeared, and protested against the jurisdiction of the court. For the purpose of deciding this point it was necessary that both parties should appear in person; and on 21st June Henry and Katharine both were present. The king demanded instant judgment for the easing of his conscience; Katharine first knelt before the king and asked for pity, then she appealed to Rome, where only the cause could be decided without partiality or suspicion. The legates overruled her appeal, and on her non-appearance declared her contumacious.

The summoning of the king and queen was merely a formal incident in the procedure of the court, but it strangely impressed itself upon men's minds. The king, whom they regarded as the fountain of law, was called to plead before one of his own subjects and a foreign priest. Apart from any thought of the question at issue,

or its rights and wrongs, Englishmen marvelled at this indignity, and felt that ecclesiastical law was some foreign thing which they could not fathom. No doubt the impression then wrought upon their minds accounts in some measure for the acceptance of the royal supremacy, as being at least more intelligible than the actual working of the outworn theory of the supremacy of the Pope.

Moreover, the suppliant attitude of Katharine awakened a strong feeling of compassion, which on 28th June found expression from the upright Bishop of Rochester, John Fisher, who appeared to plead Katharine's cause, and declared himself ready to follow the example of John the Baptist and lay down his life, if need be, to maintain the sanctity of matrimony. Others followed his example, and the signs of some dislike to the king's proceedings amongst Englishmen encouraged Campeggio to fall back upon his policy of procrastination, which the impetuous zeal of Wolsey was striving to overcome.

Henry grew more and more angry at the signs of opposition to his will which met him on every side, and Wolsey had to bear the brunt of the royal wrath. Cavendish tells how one day Wolsey left the king's presence and took his barge. The Bishop of Carlisle, who was with him, remarked that the day was hot. "Yea," quoth my lord cardinal, "if ye had been as well chafed as I have been within this hour ye would say it was very hot." He went home "to his naked bed," where in two hours' time he was found by Lord Wiltshire, who brought a message from the king, bidding him and Campeggio "repair unto the queen at Bridewell, into her chamber, to persuade her by their wisdoms,

advising her to surrender the whole matter unto the king's hands by her own will and consent, which should be much better to her honour than to stand to the trial of law and be condemned, which would seem much to her slander and defamation." Wolsey vainly complained of the folly of the lords of the Council in putting such fancies into the king's head: he was bound to rise and obey. Sadly he sought Campeggio, and with a sense of deep humiliation the two judges set out to make another attempt to browbeat an accused who had already refused to submit to their judicial authority.

On 23d July it was expected that the court would give its decision. The king was present in a gallery, and after the reading of the pleas his counsel demanded judgment. Campeggio rose and declared that as the vacation of the Roman courts began at the end of July and lasted till October, he must follow that custom, and adjourn the sittings of the court for two months. On this the Duke of Suffolk slapped the table and exclaimed, "It was never merry in England whilst we had cardinals among us." Wolsey was not the man to brook an insult, especially from one whom he had greatly benefited. "Sir," he said, "of all men within this realm ye have least cause to dispraise or be offended at cardinals: for if I, a simple cardinal, had not been, you should have had at this present no head upon your shoulders, wherein you should have a tongue to make any such report of us, who intend you no manner of displeasure."

But though Wolsey could still wear a bold face when attacked, he knew that the future was hopeless. His enemies were daily gaining ground. His place, as the king's trusted counsellor, was taken by Stephen Gar-

diner, whom he had trained, and who was now the king's secretary and Anne Boleyn's chief agent. The old nobles, headed by the Duke of Norfolk, had made common cause with the relations of Anne Boleyn, and saw their opportunity of avenging themselves for all the slights which Wolsey had put upon them. Henry was unwilling to abandon all hopes of his divorce through the legatine court, and spared Wolsey for a time; but Wolsey knew that the ground was slipping from under him. The Pope resolved to revoke the cause to Rome, and recall the powers granted to the legates; it required all Wolsey's efforts to prevent the issue of a citation to Henry to appear before the Roman court.

Moreover, Wolsey had the additional pang of seeing all the fruits of his diplomatic activity abandoned before the absorbing interest of this miserable matter of the king's domestic life. If there was one object which was dear to Wolsey's heart, it was to secure England's power in Europe by a close alliance with France. For this purpose he had made great sacrifices, and he thought that he had some claim on Francis I.'s gratitude. Yet Francis was negotiating for peace with Charles V., and a conference was being held at Cambrai between his mother Louise and Charles's aunt Margaret. Wolsey sorely longed to be present at that conference and protect the interests of England; but Henry VIII. had no interest in such matters, and only regarded Wolsey's wish as a sign that he was lukewarm in his efforts for the divorce. Moreover, Francis I. defamed him to the English envoy, the Duke of Suffolk, and did his best to foster the king's suspicion of Wolsey's zeal in "the great matter." He knew that to deprive Henry of his

acute adviser was the readiest means of hiding his own proceedings. The conference at Cambrai was an abandonment of the methods of diplomacy and a return to the old usages of the days of chivalry. Two women took counsel together about family affairs, and their object was to remove domestic difficulties. Really Francis I. was weary of a profitless warfare, and agreed to abandon Italy to Charles V. Henry VIII. was appeased by a transference of the debt of Charles V. to the shoulders of Francis I., and this promise of more money seems to have satisfied the English king. Early in August the peace was signed, and Henry was included in its provisions. If a testimony were needed that entirely English diplomacy depended upon Wolsey, it would be found in Henry's short-sightedness at this time. He did not try to influence the proceedings at Cambrai, but allowed himself to be hoodwinked by Francis I., even in the point about which he was most interested. The peace of Cambrai left Charles V. supreme in Italy, and restored in name the authority of the Pope, which the two sovereigns declared themselves resolved to maintain. Its practical result was to make the Pope more anxious to please Charles, who was now most closely connected with his political interests, and to free him from the dread of an alliance between Henry and Francis, which might have brought pressure to bear upon his action in the divorce. Clement had now no special motive for trying to conciliate the English king, and it was clear to all Europe that Wolsey no longer guided England's policy.

It was not only that Wolsey had failed in the matter of the divorce, but his failure had brought to light the

true nature of the policy which he was pursuing, and had shown that it was not adapted to the turn which affairs were taking under the influence of the king's personal desires. Wolsey had planned a conservative reform, to be carried out gradually. England, respected on the Continent, and holding the balance between France and the Empire, was gradually to assert its power and independence by setting up a strong monarchy which should overawe the Papacy, and without any formal breach with past traditions, should remodel its ecclesiastical institutions, and put its relations to the Papacy on a new footing. Henry VIII. had so far entered into the spirit of this plan as to regard the existing state of things as of little moment, and his wishes led him to try and anticipate the future. This was the most disastrous thing that could have befallen Wolsey: it is the danger which besets all attempts at conservative reform. It is hard to train men in the ideas of future change, and expect them to submit patiently to present fetters. Henry brusquely demanded too much from the Pope, and the Pope in his alarm offered too little. Wolsey tried to mediate, but he was too closely allied with Henry for the Pope to trust him, and when his object was clearly seen in a small matter he was deprived of the means by which he hoped to win. His method was framed for large operations on a large field; it was not suited for the petty task which was suddenly imposed upon him. Yet if it failed there it was sure to be condemned altogether, and the future would belong to the more revolutionary forces which he had been trying to hold in check.

So in proportion as Wolsey failed about the divorce,

the threads of his different but converging schemes fell from his hands. What was the profit to Henry of Wolsey's intricate foreign policy if it did not allow him to get a divorce when he pleased? Why should he deal tenderly with the papal authority when it threw such obstacles in his way? Why should he spare the Church when its bishops protested against him? Why should he permit the slow transformation of the monasteries when with a little trouble their spoil would fall into his hands? Why should he trust to Wolsey, who had already failed him in his need, when he had men like Gardiner, with clear heads about matters of details, to serve him at his need? Above all, why should Wolsey's fine-drawn plans stand between him and his people's affections, and lead him to do what Englishmen neither understood nor approved? These were the questions with which Henry was plied. Wolsey had been only too successful and too consistent. If his policy was abandoned in aught, it must be abandoned in all. When Henry let fall Wolsey's foreign policy, and made no effort to influence the peace of Cambrai, there was no further need of Wolsey in England's councils, and his rule was practically at an end.

Still Wolsey was permitted to retain his offices. Campeggio had not yet departed; something might still be done. The king had for some time avoided seeing Wolsey, and was engaged in wandering from place to place in the company of Anne Boleyn. At last, in the middle of September, Campeggio prepared to return to Rome, and accompanied by Wolsey went to take leave of the king, who was then at Grafton in Northamptonshire. There they arrived on 19th Septem-

ber, and Campeggio was shown to his room, but Wolsey was informed that there was no room provided for him. He was relieved from his astonishment by a groom of the stole, who said, "I assure you, sir, here is very little room in this house, scanty sufficient for the king. However, I beseech your grace to accept mine for a season." When Wolsey and Campeggio were ushered into the king's presence they found the lords of the Council eagerly watching the king's behaviour. If they expected any signs of the royal displeasure they were disappointed, as Henry received Wolsey most graciously, and drew him aside into a window, where he talked with him privately.

The king dined privately with Anne Boleyn, and Wolsey dined with the lords of the Council. In course of conversation he hinted at his own intentions for the future by saying, "It were well done if the king would send his chaplains and bishops to their cures and benefices." The Duke of Norfolk eagerly assented, and Wolsey went on to say that he would gladly go to his bishopric of Winchester. Then Norfolk showed his fears by saying, "Nay, to your see of York, whence comes both your greatest honour and charge." Already Wolsey's foes were scheming to remove him as far as possible from the royal presence.

Every one was eagerly watching and listening for the smallest indications of the royal pleasure; and Cavenish was told that Anne Boleyn at dinner with the king showed her dissatisfaction at Wolsey's kindly reception. She denounced the cardinal in no measured terms, but without any immediate result, as after dinner the king called Wolsey into his private room and talked

with him for some time; "the which blanked his enemies very sore, and made them to stir the coals, being in doubt what this matter would grow into, having now none other refuge to trust to but Mistress Anne, in whom was all their whole and firm trust and affiance." Wolsey rode off to "Master Empson's house, called Euston, three miles from Grafton," where he spent the night, and received a visit from Gardiner, who was thought to come as a spy; but Wolsey talked to him about indifferent subjects, and showed that his sense of personal dignity was still strong.

Next morning he rode early to the Court, and saw the king for a short time; but Anne Boleyn had prepared a picnic at Hatwell Park, and carried off Henry with her, that Wolsey might not have much opportunity for private talk. The king bade a hurried farewell to Wolsey and Campeggio, and then rode away with Anne, while the legates returned to London. Campeggio did not reach Dover till 8th October, and before he was allowed to embark his luggage was ransacked by the king's officials.

This extraordinary violation of the privileges of an ambassador was characteristic of the unscrupulous meanness to which Henry was now ready to descend. He hoped to find amongst Campeggio's papers the Pope's decretal about the law of the divorce. If he had found it Wolsey might still have been useful. He might have been compelled to continue the proceedings of the legatine court, and give judgment in Henry's favour, sheltering himself under the terms of the commission, and applying the interpretation of the decretal. In this way the first measures wrung out of the Pope when he

wished to be conciliating might have been used in a high-handed fashion against the conclusions of his settled policy. But Campeggio had already been instructed by the Pope to burn the decretal. Nothing was found as the result of the search, which only revealed the cardinal's poverty. He had come to England ill provided, and had gained nothing from the royal bounty.

This unworthy device seems to have been of Henry's own devising; and as soon as he heard of its failure Wolsey's doom was sealed. The king had treated him graciously, to the dismay even of Anne Boleyn, a few days before; now he abandoned him to his enemies, who had their weapons of attack in readiness. On 9th October the king's attorney sued for a writ of *præmunire* against Wolsey, on the ground that his acts done as legate were contrary to the statute. After this Wolsey's ruin was a foregone conclusion.

CHAPTER X

THE FALL OF WOLSEY

1529-1530

WHEN the storm broke over his head Wolsey had no hope of escape. His position as an English minister was due entirely to the king's favour, and when that favour was withdrawn he was entirely helpless. Outside the king there was no motive power in English politics at this period. There was no party in the State strong enough to bring any influence to bear upon him : he was likely to be moved by nothing save the dread of a popular rising, and there was no chance of a popular rising in Wolsey's favour. On the other hand, Wolsey had been contented to take upon his own shoulders the responsibility of all that was most unpopular in the king's proceedings. The demands created by the king's extravagance were put down to his extortionate nature ; the debts incurred by a policy which he disapproved were supposed to be the results of his influence ; even the divorce was attributed to his ill-will against the Emperor and his love for France. The current of popular opinion ran strong against Wolsey. He had made few friends and many enemies. His enemies were

powerful, his friends were powerless. No one in England could lend him any help.

It is true that the charge brought against him was most iniquitous. He had obtained his legatine authority through the king's urgent request; he had used it solely at the king's orders, and in the king's behalf. But he knew that such a plea would not be regarded, as the king's courts would simply register the king's will. There was no other course than entire submission, and before the king Wolsey had no thought of personal dignity. He wrote to Henry as a lowly suppliant, "For surely, most gracious king, the remembrance of my folly, with the sharp sword of your Highness's displeasure, hath so penetrated my heart that I cannot but lamentably cry, It is enough; now stay, most merciful king, your hand." Such loyalty, such entire submission, is to our minds inconceivable, and only shows how the possession of absolute power debases not only those who are invested with it but those who are brought in contact with them. Wolsey might indeed lament his "folly" in putting any trust in princes; he had served his master only too well, and met with the basest ingratitude for all the sacrifices of his own wishes and his own principles.

Still he hoped by his submission to save something. If sentence were pronounced against him, under the charge of *præmunire*, his goods would be forfeited, and his acts invalidated. If he threw himself upon the king's mercy he might at least save his two colleges, and might be permitted to serve his country on a smaller scale. What was coming he could not foresee. There would be open war between Henry and the Papacy, waged with

new weapons and fraught with danger to the English Church. "It is the intention of these lords," wrote the French ambassador, "when Wolsey is dead or destroyed, to get rid of the Church and spoil the goods of both. I suppose they mean to do grand things." The days of revolution were at hand, and Wolsey might still have some power to check its excesses.

His submission led to no immediate results. On 16th October the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk demanded the surrender of the great seal, and ordered Wolsey to depart to his house at Esher. Wolsey would humble himself before the king, but not before others, and calmly asked them for their authority. They answered that they had the king's commission by word of mouth. "The great seal of England," said Wolsey, "was delivered me by the king's own person, to enjoy during my life, with the ministration of the office and high room of chancellorship of England; for my surety whereof I have the king's letters-patent to show." High words were used by the dukes, but in the end they departed, and reappeared next day with letters from the king. On reading them Wolsey delivered up the seal, and expressed himself content to withdraw to Esher.

Before departing he made an inventory of all his plate and tapestries, that it might be ready for the king to take possession. He further signed an indenture acknowledging that on the authority of bulls obtained from Rome, which he published in England contrary to the statute, he had unlawfully vexed the prelates of the realm and other of the king's subjects, thereby incurring the penalties of *præmunire*, by which also he deserved to suffer perpetual imprisonment at the king's pleasure, and

to forfeit all his lands, offices, and goods. He besought the king, in part recompense of his offences, to take into his hands all his temporal possessions. Then he entered his barge in the presence of a crowd, which was sorely disappointed not to see him take the way to the Tower.

When Wolsey arrived at Putney he was greeted by a messenger from the king, who brought him as a token a ring, with a message "that the king bade him be of good cheer, for he should not lack. Although the king hath dealt with you unkindly, he saith that it is for no displeasure that he beareth you, but only to satisfy the minds of some which he knoweth be not your friends. Also ye know right well that he is able to recompense you with twice as much as your goods amounteth unto: and all this he bade me that I should show you. Therefore, sir, take patience; and for my part, I trust to see you in better estate than ever ye were." When Wolsey heard this he dismounted from his mule and knelt in the mud in sign of thankfulness. He gave a present to the messenger, and grieved that he had no worthy gift to send to the king. Presently he bethought himself of a jester belonging to his household. "If ye would at my request present the king with this poor fool, I trust his Highness would accept him well, for surely for a nobleman's pleasure he is worth a thousand pounds." It is a relief to find in this dismal story some signs of human feeling. "The poor fool took on so, and fired so in such a rage when he saw that he must needs depart from my lord," that six tall yeomen had to be sent as an escort to convey him safely to the Court.

It is needless to seek for a motive for Henry's conduct in sending this delusive message; probably he did it

through an amiable desire to make himself generally agreeable. No man likes to feel that he is acting villainously ; perhaps Henry's conscience felt all the pleasure of having performed a virtuous action when he heard of Wolsey's gratitude for such a small mercy. Henry VIII. was nothing if he was not conscientious ; but he made large drafts on his conscience, and paid them back in small coin. Probably we have here the record of such a payment.

Certainly Henry did nothing to give his goodwill towards Wolsey any practical expression ; he did not even send him any money to provide his household with the necessaries of life. For a month they remained "without beds, sheets, tablecloths, cups, and dishes to eat their meat or lie in," and ultimately had to borrow them. What most distressed Wolsey, who had been accustomed to munificence, was that he had not even money to pay the wages of his household before he dismissed them sadly from his service. In his straits one of his officials came to his aid, and showed his tact and management in affairs of business. Thomas Cromwell, the son of a London citizen, spent an adventurous youth in business on the Continent, and settled in London as a small attorney and a money-lender. Wolsey had found out his ability, and employed him to manage the dissolution of the monasteries, and transact the business connected with the foundation of his colleges. No doubt this gave him opportunities of spreading his own business, and making himself useful friends. In anticipation of the future he contrived to get himself elected as member of the Parliament for which Henry VIII. issued writs upon the suspension of the legatine court.

Cromwell accompanied Wolsey to Esher, and was much moved by the thought of the loss which his patron's fall was likely to inflict upon himself. On 1st November Cavendish found him leaning in the window "with a primer in his hand, saying our Lady mattins. He prayed not more earnestly than the tears distilled from his eyes." He lamented that he was in disdain with most men for his master's sake, and surely without just cause; but he was resolved that afternoon to ride to London, and so to the Court, "where I will either make or mar, or I come again." After dinner he talked with Wolsey about his household, and then showed his power of gaining popularity at the expense of others. "Have you not," he exclaimed, "a number of chaplains, to whom ye have departed very liberally with spiritual promotions? and yet have your poor servants taken much more pains for you in one day than all your idle chaplains have done in a year. Therefore if they will not freely and frankly consider your liberality, and depart with you of the same goods gotten in your service, now in your great indigence and necessity, it is pity that they live." Wolsey agreed; he summoned his household, and addressed them in a dignified speech; he gave them a month's holiday, that they might seek some more profitable service. Then Cromwell said that they lacked money, and himself tendered five pounds towards their payment, adding, "Now let us see what your chaplains will do." The example was contagious, and contributions poured in. The household was paid, and departed full of thankfulness to Cromwell. Then, after a private conversation with Wolsey, Cromwell rode off to London to "make or mar."

Parliament met on 3d November, and Wolsey's enemies hoped that its first business would be Wolsey's impeachment. For this, however, Henry VIII. was not prepared, though he did not openly forbid it. He was not sure of the capacity of his new advisers, and perhaps felt that he might have further need of Wolsey's services. Anyhow it was better to keep his opponents in constant fear of his return to power. They were bound together rather by opposition to Wolsey than by any agreement amongst themselves; and Henry was not very sanguine about their administrative success. The Duke of Norfolk, the uncle of Anne Boleyn, was president of the Council, and Suffolk was vice-president. The chancellorship was given to Sir Thomas More, who was well fitted by his literary reputation and high character to calm the fears of moderate men, and show Europe that the English king had no lack of eminent servants. The chancellorship of the duchy of Lancashire was given to the treasurer of the household, Sir William Fitzwilliam, a capable official. Gardiner preferred an ecclesiastical post, and succeeded to the bishopric of Winchester, which Wolsey was bidden to resign. It still remained to be seen if Norfolk, Suffolk, and More could fill the place of Wolsey.

Parliament was opened by the king; and the chancellor, according to custom, made a speech. In the course of it More showed that a man of letters does not necessarily retain his literary taste in politics, and that high character does not save a statesman from the temptation to catch a passing cheer by unworthy taunts at his defeated adversary. He spoke of the king as shepherd of his people, and went on, "As you see that amongst a

great flock of sheep some be rotten and faulty, which the good shepherd sendeth from the good sheep, so the great wether which is of late fallen, as you all know, so craftily, so scabbedly, yea, and so untruly juggled with the king, that all men must needs guess and think that he thought in himself that he had no wit to perceive his crafty doing, or else that he presumed that the king would not see nor know his fraudulent juggling and attempts. But he was deceived ; for his Grace's sight was so quick and penetrating that he saw him, yea, and saw through him, both within and without, so that all things to him were open ; and according to his deserts he hath had a gentle correction."

This speech of More served as introductory to a Bill which was brought into the Upper House for disabling Wolsey from being restored to his former dignities and place in the king's Council. It was founded upon a series of articles which had been drawn up by his enemies long before, and were a tissue of frivolous or groundless charges. The Bill passed the Lords, but on its introduction into the Commons was opposed by Cromwell, who knew that the king did not wish it to be passed. It answered its purpose of casting a stigma on Wolsey, and justifying Henry's conduct towards him ; but Henry did not intend to deprive himself of the power of employing Wolsey again if he should prove useful. So Cromwell served the king while he served Wolsey, and served himself at the same time by a display of zeal for his fallen master which raised him in men's esteem, "so that at length, for his honest behaviour in his master's cause, he grew into such estimation in every man's opinion, that he was esteemed to be the

most faithfullest servant to his master of all others, wherein he was of all men greatly commended." Moreover, he managed to make friends by the sure tie of self-interest. He advised Wolsey to buy off the hostility of important men by granting them pensions out of the revenues of his see: as he chose the recipients of the money and negotiated the grants he gained more gratitude than Wolsey gained profit out of the transaction. Wolsey believed that his prospects depended on Cromwell's zeal, and the great cardinal became submissive to the direction of one whom he had raised. He abode at Esher in a state of feverish anxiety, sometimes receiving a present and a gracious message from the king, often irritated by Cromwell, who deluded him by a cheap display of zeal, grieving most of all at the uncertainty of the fortunes of his great colleges, which he still wished to leave as a memorial to posterity of the schemes which he intended.

Parliament was prorogued in the middle of December, and the Bill against Wolsey was allowed to drop. The king and Anne Boleyn were delighted with the cardinal's house at York Place, of which they took possession, and Wolsey was still left in uncertainty about his future. Anxiety preyed upon his health, and at Christmas he fell ill. The news of his illness seems to have brought some remorse to Henry, who sent his own physician, and eagerly asked for tidings, saying, "I would not lose him for twenty thousand pounds." Doctor Buttes answered, "Then must your Grace send him some comfortable message as shortly as is possible." The king gave Buttes a favourite ring from his own finger, saying, "Tell him that I am not offended with him in my heart nothing at

all, and that shall he perceive, and God send him life very shortly." He asked Anne Boleyn to send also a "token with comfortable words," and Anne at his command obeyed, overcoming her reluctance by the thought that the cardinal was on his deathbed.

Doctor Buttes's prescription was a good one, and with revived hopes Wolsey speedily recovered. On 2d February 1530 the king sent him some furniture for his house and chapel. On 12th February he received a full pardon for his offences, and on 14th February was restored to the archbishopric of York and its possessions excepting York Place, which the king retained for himself. He entreated to be allowed to keep also the bishopric of Winchester and the Abbey of St. Alban's; but Gardiner had his eye on Winchester, and the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk were anxious that Wolsey should not hold a post which might bring him into the neighbourhood of the king. He was compelled to resign both these offices, and recognised in this the power of his foes.

The damp air of Esher was hurtful to his health, and he received permission to change his residence to Richmond Lodge. There he stayed until the state of the roads allowed him to take his journey northwards, which the Duke of Norfolk pressed him to do in forcible language. "Show him," he said to Cromwell, "that if he go not away shortly, I will, rather than he should tarry still, tear him with my teeth." When Wolsey heard this he said, "Marry, Thomas, then it is time to be going, if my lord of Norfolk take it so. Therefore I pray you go to the king and say that I would with all my heart go to my benefice at York but for want of money." Wolsey's immediate necessities were grudgingly

supplied by the lords of the Council, and in the beginning of Passion Week he began his journey to York. He was received with courtesy by the gentry on the way. The manor-house at Southwell, where he resolved to live, required some repairs, and he could not occupy it till 5th June.

In his house at Southwell Wolsey received the neighbouring gentry, and made himself popular amongst them. He lived simply, and applied himself to the discharge of the duties of his office with great success. A pamphlet published in 1536 says of him : " Who was less beloved in the north than my lord cardinal before he was amongst them ? Who better beloved after he had been there a while ? He gave bishops a right good example how they might win men's hearts. There were few holy days but he would ride five or six miles from his house, now to this parish church, now to that, and there cause one or other of his doctors to make a sermon unto the people. He sat amongst them and said mass before all the parish ; he saw why churches were made ; he began to restore them to their right and proper use ; he brought his dinner with him, and bade divers of the parish to it. He inquired whether there were any debate or grudge between any of them. If there were, after dinner he sent for the parties to the church and made them all one." It is an attractive picture of episcopal activity which is here set before us. We wish that Wolsey had been great enough to realise the pleasure of these simple duties so thoroughly as to wean himself from the allurements of political ambition. But Wolsey in his retirement was something like Machiavelli in exile : he found some satisfaction for his activity in the

doings of peasants, but he went home and hankered for the great life of politics which was denied him. He meditated still how he could overthrow his enemies and return to the more complex problems in which he had been trained.

At the end of the summer Wolsey removed from Southwell to another manor-house at Scrooby, where he continued the same mode of life. All this time his actions were jealously watched by his enemies, who suspected him of trying to gain popularity and raise up a party in his favour. They did their best to keep him in perpetual annoyance by threats of legal proceedings touching the possessions of the see of York. The king paid no heed to him save to exact all the money he could from his forfeiture. Amongst other things which the king claimed was the payment of Wolsey's pension from the French king; and his care for Wolsey's health at Christmas may have been due to the fact that he thought that Wolsey's life had a pecuniary value to himself. He presently dissolved Wolsey's college at Ipswich, and seized all its lands and possessions. It was a bitter blow to Wolsey to see his plans thus overthrown. He had hoped to found an institution which should promote education where it was sorely needed in the eastern counties. It was the beginning of a project which would have led to the foundation of local universities, which it has been reserved to our own day to revive. If Wolsey had remained in power monastic revenues would have been increasingly diverted to educational purposes, and England would have been provided with colleges which would have grown with local needs. The dissolution of the college at Ipswich checked this process at the begin-

ning, and negatived any scheme for the slow transformation of the monasteries into institutions which were in accordance with national needs.

Cardinal College at Oxford met with better fortune. Wolsey pleaded hard for its preservation, and the authorities of the college made a stand in its behalf. The king was not yet prepared to seize the lands of the dissolved monastery of St. Frideswyde, or of the old Canterbury Hall, which had been absorbed, and it could be shown that he would lose as much as he would gain by attempting an accurate division of the property of the college. He agreed to "have an honourable college there, but not so great and of such magnificence as my lord cardinal intended to have, for it is not thought meet for the common weal of our realm." The site of the college and a portion of its revenues were saved from the commissioners who were realising Wolsey's forfeiture; but the name of Christ Church obliterated that of Cardinal College, and Henry VIII. endeavoured as far as he could to associate the foundation with himself and dissociate it from Wolsey.

This persistent disregard of the ideas which Wolsey had striven to put forward weighed heavily on his spirits. "I am put from my sleep and meat," he wrote, "for such advertisements as I have had of the dissolution of my colleges." It was not only the sense of personal disappointment which afflicted him; it was the hopeless feeling that all his policy was being reversed. Wolsey was in his way a churchman, and hoped as a statesman to bring the Church into accordance with the national needs. He saw that only in this way could the existing resources of the Church be saved from the hand

of the spoiler. The king's desire to seize upon the revenues of his colleges showed him that Henry had cast away the principles which Wolsey had striven to enforce, that he had broken through the limits which Wolsey had endeavoured to set, and that when once he had tasted his prey his appetite was likely to be insatiable. This taught Wolsey that his own future was hopeless. On the lower level to which the king had sunk he was not likely to need the cardinal's aid. Wolsey's great schemes for the future were to make way for a policy mainly dictated by present greed. Henry VIII. had discovered how great his power was, and intended to use it for the satisfaction of his own desires.

So Wolsey turned himself more attentively to the duties of his episcopal office, hoping thereby to make some amends for past neglect, and fill up with useful work the remainder of his days. His poverty had prevented him from taking possession of his cathedral, as he had no money to defray the expenses of his installation. By the end of September he had managed to scrape together £1500, and set out from Scrooby to York. On his way he was busied with confirmations. At St. Oswald's Abbey he confirmed children from eight in the morning till noon; after dinner he returned to the church at one, and continued his confirmation till four, when he was constrained for weariness to sit down in a chair. Next morning before his departure he confirmed a hundred children more; and as he rode on his way he found at Ferrybridge two hundred children waiting for confirmation at a stone cross standing upon the green. It was late in the evening before he reached Cawood Castle, seven miles from York. There he was

visited by the Dean of York, and made arrangements for his installation.

This ceremony, however, was not to take place. Wolsey's enemies were implacable, especially the Duke of Norfolk, who was alarmed at the renewal of Wolsey's popularity in the north, and at the signs of vigour which he showed. His actions were jealously watched and eagerly criticised to find some opportunity for a charge against him, which was at last found in Wolsey's communications with foreign envoys. It would seem that Wolsey could not reconcile himself to political inactivity, and trusted that the influence of Francis I., for whom he had done so much, would be used in his favour. But Francis treated Wolsey with the proverbial ingratitude of politicians. Wolsey had been a friend of France, but his friendship had been costly, and Francis I. found that the new ministers were equally friendly to France, and did not demand so much in return. In truth, Henry, though he had abandoned Wolsey for his failure in the matter of the divorce, had not been better served by his new advisers, who had no other course to follow than that which Wolsey had marked out—to use the close alliance with France as a means of bringing pressure to bear upon the Pope. So Norfolk was obsequious to Francis, who preferred to deal with a man of Norfolk's calibre rather than acknowledge a master in Wolsey.

Of this Wolsey was ignorant; and he no longer showed his old dexterity in promoting his own interests. He made the mistake of trusting to the old methods of diplomacy when his position was no longer that of a minister, and when he had been removed from actual

touch of current affairs. He opened up communications with the French envoy by means of a Venetian physician, Agostino, who was a member of his household. He even communicated with the imperial envoy as well. However harmless these communications might be, they were certainly indiscreet, and were capable of being represented to the king as dangerous. Norfolk gained some information, either from the French envoy or from Agostino, and laid before the king charges against Wolsey, "that he had written to Rome to be reinstated in his possessions, and to France for its favour; and was returning to his ancient pomp, and corrupting the people." There was not much in these charges; but Norfolk was afraid of Wolsey in the background, and quailed before the king's bursts of petulance, in which he said that the cardinal knew more about the business of the State than any of his new advisers. Henry was quite satisfied with the proceeds of spoiling Wolsey, and was glad to keep him in reserve; but the suggestion that Wolsey was intriguing with foreign Courts sorely angered him, and he gave orders that Wolsey be brought to trial to answer for his conduct.

So Sir Walter Walshe was sent with a warrant to the Earl of Northumberland, and arrived as Wolsey was busied at Cawood with the preliminaries of his installation. On 4th November, when Wolsey had retired from dinner and was sitting in his own room over his dessert, the Earl of Northumberland appeared, and demanded the keys of the castle from the porter. He entered the hall, and posted his servants to guard all the doors. Wolsey, in ignorance of what was in store for him, met Northumberland and offered him hospitality, expressing

his delight at the unexpected visit. When they were alone the Earl, "trembling, said, with a very faint and soft voice, unto my lord, laying his hand upon his arm, 'My lord, I arrest you of high treason.'" For a time Wolsey stood speechless with astonishment, then he asked to see the warrant, which Northumberland had not brought with him. As he was speaking Sir Walter Walshe opened the door and thrust into the room the physician Agostino, whom he had made prisoner. Wolsey asked him about the warrant, and when he recognised him as one of the gentlemen of the king's privy chamber, he submitted to the royal commands without asking further for the production of the warrant. Then he delivered up his keys to Northumberland.

Agostino was at once sent to London tied under a horse's belly—a mode of conveyance which was doubtless calculated to refresh his memory. When he arrived in London he was taken to the Duke of Norfolk's house, and showed himself ready to bear witness against Wolsey. "Since they have had the cardinal's physician in their hands," writes the imperial envoy, "they have found what they sought. Since he has been here he has lived in the Duke of Norfolk's house like a prince, and is singing the tune they wished."

There was not the same need of haste in bringing Wolsey to London, for even with Agostino's help Norfolk was doubtful if the evidence against Wolsey would be sufficient to ensure his condemnation to death; and he did not wish to give Wolsey the opportunity of a trial when he might still be formidable. His imprisonment in the Tower at the royal pleasure would only bring him nearer to the king, who might at any moment make use of

him as he threatened. Really, Norfolk was somewhat embarrassed at the success of his scheme ; and Wolsey, in a conversation with Cavendish, showed a flash of his old greatness. "If I may come to my answer," he said, "I fear no man alive ; for he liveth not upon the earth that shall look upon this face and shall be able to accuse me of any untruth ; and that know my enemies full well, which will be an occasion that I shall not have indifferent justice, but they will rather seek some other sinister way to destroy me."

It was this thought that unnerved Wolsey, worn out as he was by disappointment, humiliated by his helplessness, and harassed by a sense of relentless persecution. Still he retained his dignity and kindliness, and when on the evening of 7th November he was told to prepare for his journey, he insisted upon bidding farewell to his household. The Earl of Northumberland wished to prevent this, and only gave way through fear of a tumult if he persisted in his refusal. The servants knelt weeping before Wolsey, who "gave them comfortable words and worthy praises for their diligent faithfulness and honest truth towards him, assuring them that what chance soever should happen unto him, that he was a true man and a just to his sovereign lord." Then shaking each of them by the hand he departed.

Outside the gate the country folk had assembled to the number of three thousand, who cried, "God save your grace. The foul evil take all them that hath thus taken you from us ; we pray God that a very vengeance may light upon them." Thus they ran crying after him through the town of Cawood, they loved him so well. After this moving farewell Wolsey rode through the

gathering darkness to Pomfret, where he was lodged in the abbey. Thence he proceeded through Doncaster to Sheffield Park, where he was kindly received by the Earl of Shrewsbury, whose guest he was for eighteen days. Once a day the earl visited him and tried to comfort him, but Wolsey refused all human comfort, and applied himself diligently to prayer. While he was at Sheffield Park his health, which never had been good, began to give way, and he suffered from dysentery, which was aggravated by an unskilful apothecary.

As he was thus ailing there arrived Sir William Kingston, Constable of the Tower, with a guard of twenty-four soldiers: he had received a commission from the king to bring Wolsey as a prisoner to the Tower. It would seem from this that Agostino's confessions had been skilfully raised to fan the royal wrath, and Henry gave this sign that he was prepared to treat his former minister as a traitor. The Earl of Shrewsbury did his best to treat the coming of Kingston as a trivial incident, and sent Cavendish to break the news gently to his master. Cavendish gave the message as he was bidden. "Forsooth my lord of Shrewsbury, perceiving by your often communication that ye were always desirous to come before the king's Majesty, and now as your assured friend, hath travailed so with his letters unto the king, that the king hath sent for you by Master Kingston and twenty-four of the guard to conduct you to his Highness." Wolsey was not deceived. "Master Kingston," he repeated, and smote his thigh. When Cavendish made a further attempt to cheer him he cut him short by saying, "I perceive more than you can imagine or can know. Ex-

perience hath taught me." When Kingston was introduced and knelt before him, Wolsey said, "I pray you stand up, and leave your kneeling unto a very wretch replete with misery, not worthy to be esteemed, but for a vile object utterly cast away, without desert; and therefore, good Master Kingston, stand up, or I will myself kneel down by you." After some talk Wolsey thanked Kingston for his kind words. "Assure yourself that if I were as able and as lusty as I have been but of late, I would not fail to ride with you in post. But all these comfortable words which ye have spoken be but for a purpose to bring me to a fool's paradise; I know what is provided for me."

With a mind thus agitated the sufferings of the body increased. When Wolsey took his journey next day all regarded him as a dying man. The soldiers of the guard, "as soon as they espied their old master in such a lamentable estate, lamented him with weeping eyes. Whom my lord took by the hands, and divers times by the way as he rode he would talk with them, sometime with one and sometime with another." That night he reached Hardwick Hall, in Notts, a house of the Earl of Shrewsbury, and the next day rode to Nottingham. On the way from thence to Leicester he was so feeble that he could scarcely sit upon his mule. It was dark on Saturday night when he reached Leicester Abbey, where the abbot greeted him by torchlight. "Father Abbot," he said, "I am come hither to leave my bones among you." Kingston had to carry him upstairs to his bed, which he never quitted again.

All Sunday his malady increased, and on Monday morning Cavendish, as he watched his face, thought

him drawing fast to his end. "He perceiving my shadow upon the wall by his bedside asked who was there. 'Sir, I am here,' quoth I. 'What is it of the clock?' said he. 'Forsooth, sir,' said I, 'it is past eight of the clock in the morning.'—'Eight of the clock, eight of the clock,' said he, rehearsing divers times. 'Nay, nay, it cannot be eight of the clock; for by eight of the clock ye shall lose your master, for my time draweth near that I must depart out of this world.'"

But the dying man was not to depart without a reminder of the pitiless character of the master whom he had served so well. When Wolsey left Cawood the Earl of Northumberland remained behind to examine his papers; amongst them he found a record that Wolsey had in his possession £1500, but he reported to the king that he could not find the money. Such was Henry's keenness as his own minister of finance that he could not await Wolsey's arrival in London, but wrote off instantly to Kingston, bidding him examine Wolsey how he came by the money, and discover where it was. In obedience to the royal command Kingston reluctantly visited the dying man, who told him that he had borrowed the money of divers friends and dependants whom he did not wish to see defrauded; the money was in the keeping of an honest man, and he asked for a little time before disclosing where it was.

In the night he often swooned, but rallied in the morning and asked for food. Some chicken broth was brought him, but he remembered that it was a fast-day, being St. Andrew's Eve. "What though it be," said his confessor, "ye be excused by reason of your sickness."—"Yea," said he, "what though? I will eat no

more." After this he made his confession, and about seven in the morning Kingston entered to ask further about the money. But seeing how ill Wolsey was, Kingston tried to comfort him. "Well, well," said Wolsey, "I see the matter against me how it is framed, but if I had served God so diligently as I have done the king, he would not have given me over in my gray hairs. Howbeit, this is the just reward that I must receive for my worldly diligence and pains that I had to do him service, only to satisfy his vain pleasure, not regarding my godly duty. Wherefore, I pray you, with all my heart, to have me most humbly commended unto his royal Majesty, beseeching him in my behalf to call to his most gracious remembrance all matters proceeding between him and me from the beginning of the world unto this day, and the progress of the same, and most chiefly in the weighty matter now depending (*i.e.* the divorce); then shall his conscience declare whether I have offended him or no. He is sure a prince of a royal courage, and hath a princely heart; and rather than he will either miss or want any part of his will or appetite he will put the loss of one-half of his realm in danger. For I assure you I have often kneeled before him in his privy chamber on my knees the space of an hour or two, to persuade him from his will and appetite; but I could never bring to pass to dissuade him therefrom. Therefore, Master Kingston, if it chance hereafter you to be one of his Privy Council, as for your wisdom and other qualities ye are meet to be, I warn you to be well advised and assured what matter ye put in his head, for ye shall never put it out again." He went on to bid him warn the king against the spread of

the pernicious sect of Lutherans as harmful to the royal authority and destructive of the order of the realm. Then as his tongue failed him he gasped out, "Master Kingston, farewell. I can no more, but wish all things to have good success. My time draweth on fast. I may not tarry with you. And forget not, I pray you, what I have said and charged you withal, for when I am dead ye shall peradventure remember my words much better." His breath failed him and his eyes grew fixed. The abbot came to administer supreme unction, and as the clock struck eight Wolsey passed away. "And calling to our remembrance his words the day before, how he said that at eight of the clock we should lose our master, one of us looked upon another supposing that he prophesied of his departure."

Kingston sent a message to tell the king of Wolsey's death, and hastened the preparations for his funeral. His body was placed in a coffin of boards, vested in his archiepiscopal robes, with his mitre, cross, and ring. It lay in state till five in the afternoon, when it was carried into the church and was placed in the Lady Chapel, where it was watched all night. At four in the morning mass was sung, and by six the grave had closed over the remains of Wolsey.

It would be consoling to think that a pang of genuine sorrow was felt by Henry VIII. when he heard of the death of Wolsey; but unfortunately there is no ground for thinking so, and all that is on record shows us that Henry's chief care still was to get hold of the £1500, which was all that remained of Wolsey's fortune. Cavendish was taken by Kingston to Hampton Court, where he was summoned to the king, who was engaged

in archery in the park. As Cavendish stood against a tree sadly musing Henry suddenly came behind him and slapped him on the back, saying, "I will make an end of my game, and then I will talk with you." Soon he finished his game and went into the garden, but kept Cavendish waiting for some time outside. The interview lasted more than an hour, "during which time he examined me of divers matters concerning my lord, wishing that liever than twenty thousand pounds that he had lived. Then he asked me for the fifteen hundred pounds which Master Kingston moved to my lord before his death." Cavendish told him what he knew about it, and said that it was deposited with a certain priest. "Well, then," said the king, "let me alone, and keep this gear secret between yourself and me, and let no man be privy thereof; for if I hear more of it, then I know by whom it is come to knowledge. Three may keep counsel if two be away; and if I thought that my cap knew my counsel I would cast it into the fire and burn it." Henry spoke freely, and these words disclose the secret of his strength. Every politician has a method of his own by which he hides his real character and assumes a personality which is best fitted for his designs. Henry VIII. beneath an air of frankness and geniality concealed a jealous and watchful temperament, full of crafty designs for immediate gain, resolute, avaricious, and profoundly self-seeking.

As we have been so much indebted to Cavendish for an account of Wolsey's private life, especially in his last days, it is worth while to follow Cavendish's fortunes. The king promised to take him into his own service, and to pay him his wages for the last year, amounting to

£10. He bade him ask it of the Duke of Norfolk. As he left the king he met Kingston coming from the Council, whither Cavendish also was summoned. Kingston implored him to take heed what he said. The Council would examine him about Wolsey's last words; "and if you tell them the truth you shall undo yourself." He had denied that he heard anything, and warned Cavendish to do the same. So Cavendish answered the Duke of Norfolk that he was so busied in waiting on Wolsey that he paid little heed to what he said. "He spoke many idle words, as men in such extremities do, the which I cannot now remember." He referred them to Kingston's more accurate memory. It is a dismal picture of Court life which is here presented to us. On every side was intrigue, suspicion, and deceit. Wolsey's last words were consigned to oblivion; for the frankness that was begotten of a retrospect in one who had nothing more to hope or fear was dangerous in a place whence truth was banished.

When the Council was over Norfolk talked with Cavendish about his future. Cavendish had seen enough of public life, and had no heart to face its dangers. The figure of Wolsey rose before his eyes, and he preferred to carry away into solitude his memories of the vanity of man's ambition. His only request was for a cart and horse to carry away his own goods, which had been brought with Wolsey's to the Tower. The king was gracious, and allowed him to choose six cart-horses and a cart from Wolsey's stable. He gave him five marks for his expenses, paid him £10 for arrears of wages, and added £20 as a reward. "I received all these things accordingly, and then I returned into my country."

It says much for Wolsey that he chose as his personal attendant a man of the sweet, sensitive, retiring type of George Cavendish, though it was not till after his fall from power that he learned the value of such a friend. No less significant of the times is the profound impression which Wolsey's fate excited on the mind of Cavendish, who in the retirement of his own county of Suffolk lived with increasing sadness through the changes which befell England and destroyed many of the memories which were dearest to his heart. No one then cared to hear about Wolsey, nor was it safe to recall the thought of the great Cardinal of England to the minds of men who were busied in undoing his work. Not till the days of Mary did Cavendish gather together his notes and sketch the fortunes of one whose figure loomed forth from a distant past, mellowed by the mists of time, and hallowed by the pious resignation which was the only comfort that reflection could give to the helpless recluse. The calm of a poetic sadness is expressed in the pages of Cavendish's *Memoir*. Wolsey has become to him a type of the vanity of human endeavour, and points the moral of the superiority of a quiet life with God over the manifold activities of an aspiring ambition. But Cavendish did not live to see the time when such a sermon, preached on such a text, was likely to appeal to many hearers. His work remained in manuscript, of which copies circulated amongst a few. One such copy, it is clear, must have reached the hands of Shakespeare, who, with his usual quickness of perception, condensed as much as his public could understand into his portrait of Wolsey in the play of *Henry VIII*. When the *Memoir* was first printed in 1641 it was garbled for party purposes. The

figure of Wolsey was long left to the portraiture of prejudice, and he was regarded only as the type of the arrogant ecclesiastic whom it was the great work of the Reformation to have rendered impossible in the future. Wolsey, the most patriotic of Englishmen, was branded as the minion of the Pope, and the upholder of a foreign despotism. When Fiddes, in 1724, attempted, on the strength of documents, to restore Wolsey to his due position amongst England's worthies, he was accused of Popery. Not till the mass of documents relating to the reign of Henry VIII. was published did it become possible for Dr. Brewer to show the significance of the schemes of the great cardinal, and to estimate his merits and his faults.

CHAPTER XI

THE WORK OF WOLSEY

"No statesman of such eminence ever died less lamented," is Dr. Brewer's remark on Wolsey's death. Indeed, the king had forgotten his old servant; his enemies rejoiced to be rid of a possible rival; the men whom he had trained in politics were busy in seeking their own advancement, which was not to be promoted by tears for a fallen minister; the people had never loved him, and were indifferent about one who was no longer powerful. In a time of universal uncertainty every one was speculating on the future, and saw that the future was not to be determined by Wolsey or by Wolsey's ideas. Not without reason has the story of Wolsey's fall passed into a parable of the heartlessness of the world.

For Wolsey lived for the world as few men have ever done; not for the larger world of intellectual thought or spiritual aspiration, but for the actual, immediate world of affairs. He limited himself to its problems, but within its limits he took a wider and juster view of the problems of his time than any English statesman has ever done. For politics in the largest sense, comprising all the rela-

tions of the nation at home and abroad, Wolsey had a capacity which amounted to genius, and it is doubtful if this can be said of any other Englishman. There have been many capable administrators, many excellent organisers, many who bravely faced the difficulties of their time, many who advocated particular reforms and achieved definite results. But Wolsey aimed at doing all these things together and more. Taking England as he found her, he aimed at developing all her latent possibilities, and leading Europe to follow in her train. In this project there was nothing chimerical or fantastic, for Wolsey's mind was eminently practical. Starting from the existing condition of affairs, he made England for a time the centre of European politics, and gave her an influence far higher than she could claim on material grounds. Moreover, his far-reaching schemes abroad did not interfere with strict attention to the details of England's interests. His foreign policy was to promote English trade, facilitate the union of Scotland, keep peace at small expense, prepare the way for internal re-organisation, and secure the right of dealing judiciously with ecclesiastical reform. Wolsey's plans all hung together. However absorbed he might be in a particular point it was only part of a great design, and he used each advantage which he gained as a means of strengthening England's position for some future undertaking. He had a clear view of the future as a whole; he knew not only what he wished to make of England but of Europe as well. He never worked at a question from one motive only; what failed for one purpose was made useful for another; his resources were not bounded by the immediate result.

Politics to him was not a pursuit, it was a passion. He loved it as an artist loves his art, for he found in it a complete satisfaction for his nature. All that was best, and all that was worst, in Wolsey sprang from this exceptional attitude towards statecraft, which he practised with enthusiasm, not in the spirit of cold calculation. The world is accustomed to statesmen who clothe the results of calculation in the language of enthusiasm; Wolsey's language was practical and direct, his passionate aspirations were restrained within his own bosom.

Thus there is a largeness and distinction about Wolsey's aims, a far-reaching patriotism, and an admirable lucidity. He was indeed a political artist, who worked with a free hand and a certain touch. He was absorbed in his art as a painter over his picture, and he did not shrink as the full size of his canvas was gradually enrolled. He set himself to dominate Europe, and was fearless and self-contained. He gave himself entirely to his work, and in his eyes the nobility of his end justified any means. But he was sensitive, as all artists are, and could not work under cramped conditions. When he was restricted to the small matter of the divorce his hand lost its cunning. He was, though he knew it not, fitted to serve England, but not fitted to serve the English king. He had the aims of a national statesman, not of a royal servant.

Wolsey's misfortune was that his lot was cast on days when the career of a statesman was not distinct from that of a royal servant. He owed his introduction to politics solely to royal favour, and neither had nor could obtain any other warrant for his position. For good or evil England was identified with her king,

and it was long before it could be otherwise. Certainly Wolsey had no wish that it should be otherwise, and his subservience to the royal will seems to us to be unworthy of his greatness. But Wolsey associated his political life with the king's goodwill, and Henry was to him a symbol of all that was best and most intelligent in England. His deviations from his own policy in obedience to the king were not more degrading or more inevitable than are the calculations of the modern statesman about the exact limits of the field of practical politics. A statesman has not only to form projects, he has to secure a force behind him which will enable him to give them effect. Each age recognises this fact, and acts accordingly. There is nothing more intrinsically base in Wolsey's subservience to the royal will than in the efforts of modern statesmen to bid against one another for an opportunity of carrying out what they think to be the will of the people. No politician has a complete command of his field of action ; his high-mindedness and purity must be tested by the degree of compromise which consciously or unconsciously he makes between his love of power and his knowledge or his conscience. The utmost that can be demanded of him is that he should not, to keep his place, deliberately act contrary to what he believes to be wise or knows to be right.

In his general conduct of politics Wolsey was true to his principles, and though occasionally thwarted, he still pursued the same ends. The matter of the divorce was sprung upon him, and it would have been well for Wolsey's fame if he had retired rather than involve himself in the unworthy proceedings to which it led. But

the temptation to all men to think themselves necessary in the sphere which they have made their own is a subtle one; and those who begin by hoping that they may minimise inevitable mischief, end by being dragged into the mire. To a statesman this temptation is great in proportion to the largeness of his ultimate aim. He resents that his schemes should be ruined by a temporary derangement of the perspective of affairs; he believes that his practised hand can easily solve a trumpety difficulty; the excellence of his intentions in the long-run justifies an occasional sacrifice on the shrine of present necessity. If he does some things amiss, after all he is not responsible for them; they are disagreeable incidents in his tenure of office.

So Wolsey regarded the divorce; and he is not greatly to be blamed for agreeing to promote it. He saw great national advantages in a divorce; he knew that it would be well for England if Henry VIII. left male issue; he did not like the political influence of Katharine; he saw that Henry was not likely to be happy in her society. It would have been difficult for him to find in the proposal itself a sufficient reason for withdrawing from politics even if he could have done so with safety. Not even Wolsey could foresee the king's obstinacy and tenacity of purpose, the depth of meanness to which he would sink, and to which he would drag all around him. Wolsey found himself powerless to resist, and the growing consciousness of moral turpitude practised to no purpose degraded him in his own eyes and robbed him of his strength. When once the divorce question was started Wolsey was pushed on to his ruin by a power of imperious wickedness which debased others without

losing its own self-respect. The dictates of public opinion are, after all, not so very different from the commands of an absolute king. Both may destroy their victims, and go on their own way with heads erect.

So when we speak of the fall of Wolsey we mean more than his irrevocable loss of power. He had lost his inner strength, and no longer kept his hold upon affairs. He knew that he was sullied and unnerved ; that he had sunk from the position of a leader to that of one who tremblingly follows and devises shifty plans that he may still exercise the semblance of his old authority. He knew that in his negotiations about the divorce he staked everything that he had gained, and that the result, whatever it was, would be disastrous to his great designs. If he had succeeded he would have degraded the Papacy ; and when Henry had once learned how easy it was for him to get his own way, he would have used his knowledge to the full, and Wolsey would have been powerless to direct him. When Wolsey became the instrument of the king's self-will, he hoped that a few disappointments would wear out his obstinacy ; when he saw Henry's growing resoluteness and complete self-will he knew that for himself the future was hopeless. Still he had not the magnanimity to resign himself to his disappointment. He clung to power when power had ceased to be useful for his plans. He clung to power, because the habits of office had become to him a second nature. He vainly strove to find satisfaction in the discharge of his episcopal duties ; he vainly tried to content himself with the simple affairs of simple men. He had given himself entirely to the material world, and had estranged himself from the spiritual world, which

was to him thin and unsubstantial to the last. He could not refrain from casting longing glances behind him, and his last days are pitiable. The words of the dying man are often quoted as showing the misery of those who trust in princes' favour. But they are not merely an echo of a far-off state of things which has passed by for ever. "To serve one's country" may have a loftier and more noble sound than "to serve one's king," but the meaning is not necessarily different. The thought in Wolsey's heart was this—"If I had served the spiritual interests of my country as I have striven to serve its material interests my conscience would be more at rest." For Wolsey was a true patriot, and had noble aims. Much as he might deaden his conscience, he did not extinguish it; and his last judgment of himself expressed the sad conviction that neither his patriotism nor the nobility of his aims had saved him from actions which he could not justify, and which his conscience loudly condemned.

We have called Wolsey a political artist: and this, which makes his career attractive, is the secret of his unpopularity. Wolsey's designs did not arise from the pressure of absolute necessity, and their meaning was not apparent to his contemporaries. Englishmen thought then, as they think now, that England should disregard foreign affairs and develop her own resources; or if foreign affairs are undertaken they demand the success of English arms, and claim to be repaid in current coin or palpable advantages. Wolsey believed that the establishment of England's power on the Continent was necessary for the increase of English trade, and was a preliminary for the wise solution of those questions which

were most urgent in domestic politics. He was the last English statesman of the old school, which regarded England not as a separate nation, but as an integral part of Western Christendom. He did not look upon questions as being solely English questions: he did not aim merely at reforming English monasteries or asserting a new position for the English Church. But he thought that England was ripe for practically carrying out reforms which had long been talked of, and remedying abuses which had long been lamented; and he hoped that England in these respects would serve as a model to the rest of Europe. Only if England was in full accord with European sentiment, was powerful, and was respected, could this be done. Wolsey did not prefer foreign politics on their own account, but he found them to be the necessary preliminary for any lasting work on the lines which he contemplated. As regards Church matters he was strictly practical. He had no belief in reforming councils, or pragmatic sanctions, or Gallican liberties; he cared little for England's weapon of *præmunire*. He did not look upon the Pope as a powerful adversary who was to be held at arm's length; he regarded him as a man to be managed and converted into a useful ally. Wolsey was entirely Erastian. Power was to him the important thing in human affairs, and all power was the same; he believed much more in the divine right of Henry VIII. than in the divine right of Clement VII. merely because Henry's power seemed to him practically to be greater. However poetical Wolsey's main ideas might be, he had no illusions about the actual facts of politics.

The Englishmen of his own day did not appreciate

Wolsey's aims, and supposed that his foreign policy was for the gratification of his own vanity, or was the result of a desire to gain the Papacy. No one understood him in his own time. He bore the burden of everything that was done, and all the causes of popular discontent were laid at his door. If the loyalty of Wolsey seems strange to our eyes, still more inexplicable is the loyalty of the English people, who could believe in Henry's good intentions, and could suppose that he was entirely ruled by Wolsey contrary to his own inclinations. Wolsey was universally hated; by the nobles as an upstart, by the people as a tyrant, by Churchmen as a dangerous reformer, by the Lutherans as a rank Papist. While he was in power he kept in restraint various elements of disorder; but he shared the fate of those who rule without identifying themselves with any party. When his power came to an end no minister could assume his place or pick up the threads which fell from his hands. It was left to Henry VIII., who had learned more from Wolsey than any one else, to direct England's fortunes on a lower level of endeavour. We may admire his clear head and his strong hand; we may even prefer the results of his solution to those which Wolsey would have wrought; but we must confess that personal motives held the chief place in his mind, and that considerations of the common weal came only in the second place. For Henry VIII. abandoned Wolsey's idea of a European settlement of ecclesiastical questions, and gradually undertook a national settlement on lines drawn solely with reference to his own desires and his own interest. In this simpler matter it was possible for him to enjoy some measure of success, and this was chiefly due to the

preparation which Wolsey had made. For the work of a statesman is never entirely thrown away ; if his own plans fail, he leaves the way open for others who may use his means for widely different ends.

Wolsey was the creator of the forces which worked the great change in England in the sixteenth century. He obtained for England a position in the esteem of Europe which he had meant to use for the direction of Europe generally. Henry used that position for the assertion of England's right to settle its own affairs for itself ; and the position proved strong enough to ward off foreign interference, and to carry England safely through the first period of a dangerous crisis. It was because Wolsey had laid a sure foundation that England emerged from her separatist policy, isolated, it is true, but not excluded from European influence. Again, Wolsey exalted the royal power, because he believed that it alone could rise above the separate interests of classes, and could give a large expression to the national weal. Henry profited by Wolsey's labours to pursue exclusively his own interests, yet he learned enough to interweave them dexterously with some national interests in such a way that they could not practically be disentangled, and that he had sufficient adherents to put down opposition when it arose. Even the preliminary steps which Wolsey had taken were carefully followed. His scheme for the gradual conversion of monasteries into more useful institutions was revived, and men believed that it would be imitated : the very agents that he had trained for the work of turning monasteries into educational establishments were employed in sweeping the monastic revenues into the royal coffers. So it

was with all other things. Henry learned Wolsey's methods, and popularised Wolsey's phrases. He clothed his own self-seeking with the dignity of Wolsey's designs; the hands were the hands of Henry, but the voice was an echo of the voice of Wolsey.

The new England that was created in the sixteenth century was strangely unlike that which Wolsey had dreamed of, yet none the less it was animated by his spirit. His ideal of England, influential in Europe through the mediatorial policy which her insular position allowed her to claim, prosperous at home through the influence which she obtained by her far-sighted wisdom and disinterestedness—this is Wolsey's permanent contribution to the history of English politics.

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THE END

Twelve English Statesmen

OLIVER CROMWELL



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BY

FREDERIC HARRISON

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CHAPTER I

BIRTH—PARENTAGE—EDUCATION

A.D. 1599–1620. *ÆTAT.* 1–21

OLIVER CROMWELL was born at Huntingdon, on the 25th of April 1599. It was the dark year in Elizabeth's decline, which saw the fall of Essex and Tyrone's war. In the year preceding, Burleigh and Philip of Spain had both passed away; in the year following was born Charles the First. The sixteenth century, which had opened with such hopes, was closing in strife and gloom; the Tudor dynasty was in its wane; and the brilliant life of the Renaissance had already deepened into the long struggle for conscience and freedom.

Oliver was the only surviving son of Robert Cromwell, the second son of Sir Henry Cromwell and younger brother of Sir Oliver Cromwell, both knights of Hinchinbrook, near Huntingdon. His mother was Elizabeth, the daughter of William Steward and sister of Sir Thomas Steward, both landowners of Ely. He came of a race well born and of good estate: as did Pym, Eliot, Hampden, Vane, St. John, Hutchinson, and Blake. "I was by birth a gentleman,"—so he told his first Parliament—"living neither in any considerable height, nor

yet in obscurity." "*Est Oliverius Cromwellus*," wrote Milton, "*genere nobili atque illustri ortus*." The genealogists of later times have discovered for him traces of historic descent, which are more or less inventions, and were wholly unrecognised by the Protector himself. There is no foundation for the supposed connection of the Steward family with the royal house of Stuart. The descent of the Cromwells from "Glothian, Lord of Powis, before the Norman Conquest," is doubtless as mythical as the descent of the Stewards from "Banquo, the common ancestor of the Stewards and the Stuarts."

Both Cromwells and Stewards were families which had grown to wealth and importance at the dissolution of the monasteries. The Stewards had been planted at Ely, enriched with revenues of the Church, by the great-uncle of the Protector's mother, Robert Steward, D.D., who had the singular fortune to be for twenty years the last Catholic Prior, and then, for twenty years more, the first Protestant Dean, of Ely. The Cromwells of Huntingdon were descendants of Sir Richard Cromwell, otherwise called Williams, a kinsman of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex, the *Malleus Monachorum*, or "Hammer of Monasteries," under Henry VIII.

For generations the Cromwells were conspicuous for loyalty, chivalry, and public spirit. Sir Richard Cromwell, the founder of the house, the great-grandfather of the Protector, had been one of the *preux chevaliers* of Henry's Court, and was an ardent supporter of Thomas Cromwell, the Vicar-General. In letters to the Earl he signs himself "your bounden nephew"; he was, in fact, the son of Catherine, Cromwell's sister. Sir Richard's family was *Williams* of Glamorganshire,

a name which he was authorised to change for that of his kinsman and patron; and in his will he describes himself as Sir Richard Williams, otherwise called Sir Richard Cromwell. His descendants continued to use the family name of *Williams* concurrently with that of *Cromwell*; it appears in Oliver's marriage settlement, and even in the inscription over the Protector's bed when his effigy lay in state. Sir Richard Cromwell retained the favour of Henry VIII. on the fall of his great kinsman. Honours, grants, offices, civil and military, came to him in profusion; he married the daughter of Sir Thomas Martyn, Lord Mayor of London; and, dying one year before his master, he left vast estates in five counties to his children.

His eldest son, Sir Henry Cromwell, the Protector's grandfather, was knighted by Elizabeth in 1563, and in the next year entertained the Queen at Hinchinbrook, a noble house which he built on his principal estate, and in which he incorporated the suppressed Benedictine nunnery. He represented the county of Huntingdon in the Parliament of 1563, was four times High Sheriff, and by his liberality and magnificence acquired the name of the Golden Knight. He married a daughter of Sir Ralph Warren, Lord Mayor of London. Sir Oliver, the eldest son of Sir Henry, uncle and godfather to the Protector, was even more sumptuous and more loyal than his father and grandfather. He too was knighted by Elizabeth, served as High Sheriff for the counties of Huntingdon and Cambridge, and sat in many Parliaments in the reigns of the Queen, of James I., and of Charles I. He married first the daughter of Sir H. Bromley, Lord Chancellor, and afterwards the

widow of Sir Horatio Palavicini, the famous financier. When James of Scotland succeeded to the throne of England, Sir Oliver entertained him during two days at Hinchinbrook on his state progress to London, with a lavish magnificence which delighted the king, and which was said to have surpassed any feast ever offered to monarch by a subject. He was made Knight of the Bath at the Coronation, and continuing his royal entertainments, he ultimately ruined himself; and lived in seclusion, a stubborn cavalier to the last, well into the Protectorate of his godson. The many sons of Sir Henry and those of Sir Oliver, all knights or country gentlemen in the eastern counties, served in public offices, in Parliament, or as soldiers; and, during the civil war, for the most part on the side of the king. The daughters of Sir Henry and those of Sir Oliver were married to men of good family and estate: the most illustrious of these being Oliver's aunt Elizabeth, the mother of John Hampden.

Robert Cromwell, the father of Oliver, was a cadet of this knightly house; and his simple home at Huntingdon was in modest contrast with the splendour of Hinchinbrook. As one of the younger sons of Sir Henry, the Golden Knight, he inherited a small estate, in and near the town of Huntingdon, chiefly possessions which formerly belonged to the Austin Canons. This estate amounted, with the great tithes of Hartford, to about £300 a year, a tolerable fortune in those times; rather more than £1000 now. His wife had a jointure of £60 a year, or somewhat more than £200 in our day. He represented the borough in Parliament in 1593; was one of the town bailiffs in two successive years; and

was in the commission of the peace for the county. He lived in a stone house, at the northern extremity of the town, having extensive back premises and a fine garden, the Hinchin brook flowing through the courtyard. There Oliver was born. The room was to be seen until 1810; but the house has been twice rebuilt. It fronts the old Roman road, still called *Ermine Street*; and is now a solid manor-house with a fine old garden: some traces of the external walls and of the original offices remain. It is in the possession of Captain Isaac Bernard, and is known as *Cromwell House*: the footpath alongside its garden, leading to the water-meadows, is named *Cromwell's Walk*.

Robert Cromwell is described as a gentleman of good sense and competent learning; of a great spirit, but without any ambition; regular in his habits, reserved, and somewhat proud. He served in the local duties of his town and at quarter sessions, managed his estate, was on various commissions for draining the fens; a steadfast and worthy man, bringing up in honour a family of ten children, of whom Oliver was the only son that survived.

From the civil troubles to the present day controversy has raged round the question if he or his family carried on the trade of a brewer. Tradition, lampoons, and biographies persistently assert that he did; nor is there any real evidence to the contrary. The house at Huntingdon was occupied as a brewery before it belonged to Robert Cromwell; lampoons published during Charles I.'s lifetime certainly call Oliver a brewer; but his earliest, and most hostile, biographer asserts that not he but his father was the brewer. We

are most circumstantially told that the brewing business was carefully managed by Mrs. Robert Cromwell, and continued by her on her husband's death. There is no decisive evidence; and the matter has no importance. Robert Cromwell, like his son Oliver, was a gentleman managing a small estate and cultivating a moderate farm. But the better opinion seems to be that the business of brewing was carried on at some time by Robert Cromwell, or his wife and widow; though not by Oliver himself.

Of Elizabeth Steward, the mother of Oliver, we have a record both clearer and more full. She was a granddaughter of Nicolas Steward, elder brother of the first Dean of Ely, who had secured for his family considerable estates in Ely, on long leases from the dean and chapter, together with the privilege of farming the great tithes. On the death of Elizabeth's father, her brother, Sir Thomas Steward, enjoyed the family estates: an energetic and popular citizen of Ely, who, being childless, regarded Oliver, the only son of his sister Elizabeth, as his heir. Elizabeth Steward, named of course, like Oliver's own wife and aunt, after the Queen, was the widow of William Lynne, when she married Robert Cromwell about 1591. By him she had ten children, of whom Oliver was the fifth. The concurrent testimony of all contemporary writers describes her as a woman of strong character, of sterling goodness, and of simple nature. The very lampoons and invectives have no evil word for this blameless matron. "Both Robert Cromwell and his wife," we are told, "were persons of great worth, . . . remarkable for living on a small fortune with decency, and maintaining

a large family by their frugal circumspection." She survived her husband thirty-seven years, and married her daughters to men of worth and honour. She was much beloved by her relations, and also by those of her husband, particularly by Sir Oliver Cromwell, the godfather of her son. The supposed portrait of her shows us a face curiously resembling her son, the motherly form of the same type: strong, homely, keen, with firm mouth, penetrating eyes, a womanly goodness and peacefulness of expression; the genial face demurely enveloped in its flowing wimple and prim lawn kerchief. Between this Puritan mother and her great son love and esteem of the deepest continued till death. He was but eighteen in the year when she lost at once husband and father. From that time till her death mother and son lived almost constantly together. As her son rose to power she remained at his side to love, exhort, comfort; to pray for him and to fear for him. In the highest place, as in a humble place, she continued simple and steadfast. The Protector insisted on lodging her beside him in the Palace of Whitehall; and at her death, as it seems, in her ninetieth year, in spite of her wishes to the contrary, he buried her royally in the Abbey. There she lay in peace amongst kings and queens until the Restoration, when her bones were cast forth and thrust into a hole. Few English women have had a destiny more strange: yet in all things she remained the homely, provident, devout matron. "A little while before her death," says Thurloe, "she gave my lord her blessing in these words: 'The Lord cause His face to shine upon you, and comfort you in all your adversities, and enable you to do great things for the glory of your

Most High God, and to be a relief unto His people. My dear son, I leave my heart with thee. A good-night ! ”

Of such father and mother, and from such a home, came Oliver, the future Protector of the Commonwealth Born, as we have said, on the 25th April 1599, he was christened in the church of St. John's, at Huntingdon, as the parish register still records, on the 29th of that month ; and Sir Oliver, his uncle, gave him his name at the font. Not a few of the elements which make up the history of our people were represented in his birth and surroundings. Essentially a townsman, the son of a townsman, one who passed his early life in towns, but also a landowner occupied in the business of farming, he lived to maturity, as his father had done, the active citizen of a thriving eastern township. The eastern townships then were the core of the prosperous, independent, and pious middle class : and the household of Robert Cromwell in Huntingdon was a type of that order of life. Oliver Cromwell belonged to a race which, by its wealth and alliances, stood in the front rank of the untitled gentry of England, and which, by its ostentatious loyalty, had been personally connected with the Court for three generations. Hinchinbrook, with its royal pageants and knightly splendour, was within a mile of Robert Cromwell's plain home in Huntingdon. The uncles and great-uncles, the sisters, aunts, and great-aunts of Oliver were connected by their marriages with scores of families conspicuous in honour and the service of the State. His father's paternal estate, and that of his mother's brother, both of which Oliver inherited and farmed, were old Church lands. Cromwells and Stewards, whoever their remoter ancestors might have

been, were conspicuous examples of the new Reformation houses. The homestead in which Oliver was born had been built on the ruins of the Augustine friars; the lordly mansion of his grandfather had for its domestic offices the cells of Benedictine nuns. On every circumstance of his home the Protestant seal was set. So many things went to the making of that compound nature—knighthood, burgerhood, the Crown's honours, the State's service, the ancient Church, the Reformation, revolution both social and religious, Puritanism, the Bible.

For Oliver's boyhood there is nothing but unlimited conjecture and most dubious legend. Neither of these need detain us. In January 1603 Sir Henry Cromwell, the Golden Knight, died at Hinchinbrook, and Sir Oliver, his son, reigned in his stead. In March died Elizabeth, the last of the Tudors, and James, first of the Stuarts, peacefully succeeded. In April, two days after the boy's fourth birthday, took place the royal entertainment which Sir Oliver gave to the new king. Passing through the sculptured gatehouse of the Benedictine convent, James entered the great court of Hinchinbrook in state, Lord Southampton bearing before him the sword of honour presented by the town of Huntingdon; the dignitaries of the University came from Cambridge to congratulate the king in a Latin oration. The mansion was thrown open; all comers were made free of its kitchens and cellars; and when, on the third day, the king set forth to his capital, a gold cup, horses, hounds, hawks, and gifts of money were presented to James and to his Scotch courtiers. The earliest recollections of the child must have been of the new gay dynasty, and his own courtly godfather.

There is a tradition that in the following year Charles, then Duke of York, was taken to Hinchinbrook on his way to London, that he played with the little Oliver, and was worsted in fisticuffs. In 1604 Oliver was five and Charles was four: it is quite possible that they met as children in Sir Oliver's hall. But enough of this and of the other traditions of his boyhood. How the ape at Hinchinbrook carried him off as an infant on to the roof; how he was saved from drowning by the curate, who lived to repent his act; how he robbed orchards and dove-houses, and was known as an "apple-dragon"; how he had nightly visions and prophetic omens; how he played rude pranks at Yule-tide; how Sir Oliver had him ducked by the Lord of Misrule; how Sir Thomas Steward rebuked him as a traitor; how, when one night a spirit appeared to him in a dream and foretold that he should be the greatest man in the kingdom, his father had him mercilessly caned; how "from his infancy to his childhood he was of a cross and peevish disposition"; how, in a school play, he had once to put on a stage crown and to say—

"Methinks I hear my noble parasites
Styling me Cæsar or great Alexander,"

—are not these things written in the "Lives," lampoons, and loose flux called "tradition"—part, it may be, truth, part exaggeration, part scurrilous invention?

One certain and important fact stands out in Oliver's boyhood. He was sent to the free school at Huntingdon, an ancient foundation attached to the Hospital of St. John, which still flourishes and retains some fragments of the old twelfth-century chapel. The then master and warden was Thomas Beard, Doctor of Divinity. The

connection between Oliver and his master was very close and very long; and of the latter we have very definite knowledge. For upwards of thirty years, and down to his death in 1632, Dr. Beard lived, taught, and preached in Huntingdon. He was not only master and warden of St. John's foundation, but "lecturer" in All Saints' Church, and also an active citizen and justice of the peace in Huntingdon. He is the author of several works—*Anti-Christ the Pope of Rome*, etc., *The Theatre of God's Judgments*, etc. etc., and a Latin play; from all of which we gather that he was a sound scholar, a man of wide reading, a zealous Puritan, and an ardent reformer. His reputed portrait, holding his ferule, is that of a stern, vigorous, keen man. Gossip represents him as a flogging pedagogue, under whom the young Oliver suffered much and to little purpose. It may be so, it may be not. What we know is, that Dr. Beard is constantly associated in Huntingdon records with the Cromwells, that he witnesses Robert's will, that he was Oliver's first teacher, that Oliver's earliest extant letter is an earnest plea for such lectures which "provide for the feeding of souls," and his first speech in Parliament was to bear witness of this very Dr. Beard, that the Doctor and Oliver are two of the three justices for Huntingdon. The future Protector then, we know, was educated in the Grammar School of his native town by a typical Puritan teacher, with whom he remained in close intimacy till manhood.

From the Grammar School of Huntingdon Oliver Cromwell proceeded to Cambridge, where he was admitted on the 23d of April 1616 as Fellow-Commoner at Sidney Sussex College. It was the very day on which

Shakespeare died at Stratford. It was within two days of young Cromwell's seventeenth birthday. Sidney Sussex College was stigmatised by Laud as one of the nurseries of Puritanism. The head then and for twenty-seven years afterwards was Dr. Samuel Ward, one of the translators of the English Bible in 1611, who was named in 1618 as one of the delegates at the Synod of Dort. Once accounted a Puritan, he was always a stout Protestant, a man of great learning, morbidly sensitive as to his duty, a strict disciplinarian, who records in his diary his compunction for the sin of too great laxity in exacting from his scholars accounts of the sermons they attended. There is no evidence how long Cromwell's college career lasted. The unfriendly "Lives" assure us it was short. He took no degree, nor does his name appear elsewhere in the books.

How far did Cromwell's studies at school and at college extend? The unfriendly memoirs assert that he gained little at either; that, on the contrary, he was more famous in the fields than in the schools; that he was foremost in football, cudgels, and all boisterous sports; nay, that he consorted with drinking companions, gained the name of royster, and was given to debauchery. The friendly memoirs, on the other hand, assure us that he made "good proficiency in the university"; "that there wanted not presages of his future greatness"; that "he finished his course of study, and perfectly acquired the Latin tongue"; that he excelled chiefly in mathematics, and "yielded to no gentleman in the rest of the arts and sciences." One of them, indeed, tells us that "he was not so much addicted to speculation as to action, as was observed by

his tutor." That is, perhaps, at once friendly and truthful.

The truth as to Cromwell's learning is probably this. He certainly understood Latin conversation. Latin was then the language of diplomacy; and educated men were supposed to use it readily both in writing and speech. Beverning carried on a negotiation with the Protector speaking in Latin. Burnet says that Cromwell spoke Latin, but viciously and scantily; perhaps as many of our statesmen now speak French. In letters in mature life Cromwell spoke of his son's education; he recommends to him history, to study mathematics, cosmography. "These fit for public services for which a man is born." He tells Richard he should recreate himself with Raleigh's *History of the World*. Now a man who loved such books as Raleigh's *History of the World* and Dr. Beard's *Theatre of God's Judgments*, a book with a curious range of miscellaneous reading, would have a considerable storehouse of historical analogies. Edmund Waller, the poet, declared that Cromwell "was very well read in Greek and Roman story." From his letters and speeches we gather that he had a well-stored mind, and we are told that, as Protector, he collected "a noble collection of books." There is no reason to suppose that he ever was a student in the special sense of the word. But he acquired, at some time of his life, an education adequate for all his public duties.

It is probable that Oliver's college career did not extend beyond his eighteenth year, a year which proved an epoch in his life. In the March of that year (1617) King James was entertained at Hinchinbrook for the fourth and last time, and was attended by Laud and by

Buckingham. On the 6th of June following Robert Cromwell made his will: on the 24th he was buried. On the 20th of the month, four days before the burial, his daughter Margaret, then just seventeen, was married to Valentine Walton. We know no more of the circumstances under which Oliver within four days was called on to attend his young sister's wedding and then his father's funeral. By his will Robert Cromwell left two-thirds of his estate, and a sum of £600, to his wife for twenty-one years to maintain his daughters. Of these he left six living, the youngest about seven years old. Oliver, his only son, was then eighteen. It seems that, being his father's heir, and the only son of his mother, he did not continue at college. He probably returned to his home at Huntingdon, at least for a time, to manage his father's estate.

A persistent but confused tradition asserts that Cromwell, after leaving college, studied law at Lincoln's Inn; and it is even said that he occupied rooms in the fine old gatehouse of 1518. His name is not found in the books of any Inn; but it is difficult to resist the repeated assertion of the "Lives," and still more the inscription over his effigy as it lay in state, that "he was educated in Cambridge, afterwards of Lincoln's Inn." It is extremely probable that he made some study of law, as did every civilian who had any idea of entering public life, as did Eliot, Pym, Hampden. When, how long, and to what purpose he studied law, we know nothing. There are indications in his speeches that he understood the general principles of law, and he is said to have carried on a long legal argument with learned civilians, whom he impressed with his knowledge.

Such was the course of his education to full age. The times had not a little to teach him. He was six years old when the Gunpowder Plot shook all England ; eleven when Henry IV. was stabbed in Paris. In his twelfth year appeared the new version of the Bible. The whole book-learning of the youth must have gone on at the very season when that incomparable masterpiece of the English tongue was beginning to mould the speech and thought of our race. When he was nineteen Raleigh was beheaded in Old Palace Yard, a sacrifice to Spain ; and in the same year began the terrible Thirty Years' War in Germany, dragging on its devastating course until the end of our first Civil War in England.

What was the manner of life of the young man we know not. Friendly writers tell us that he was addicted more to the reading of men than to poring over authors. Unfriendly writers assure us (but in a confused, inconsistent way) that he was given to roystering, extravagance, coarseness, and vice. Such testimony as theirs we cannot trust ; but we cannot now refute it. Certainly he bore through life a strange turn for rough jests. When we first reach authentic utterances of Cromwell himself, we meet with a spirit of intense religious earnestness. The whole of his surroundings in childhood and youth tended to that direction. A Puritan mother, a serious father, a zealous Puritan schoolmaster, a Puritan college, under a Puritan head, his father's premature death and his own early responsibilities, his veneration for his mother, his early marriage, do not suggest a vicious youth. Yet they do not positively exclude it. At the age of thirty-nine he writes to his cousin, Mrs

St. John: "You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light; I was a chief, the chief of sinners." So, indeed, said St. Paul. And in the mouth of an earnest Puritan this phrase from Scripture refers, not to profligacy, but to a time before "conversion." That he should so write at thirty-nine suggests that his spiritual conversion was not in early youth. When and how that conversion took place we know not. There was a time, no doubt, when that mighty nature had not fully absorbed the great Bible conception, how the entire life of man is one intimate communion with God. There may have been a period (we have no sufficient proof that there was) when that passionate mass of manhood may have been a law to itself, in the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. Each of us must imagine as he best can how that great soul passed into its new birth, at what age, under what surroundings, and through what agonies and storms.

CHAPTER II

MARRIAGE—FAMILY—DOMESTIC LIFE

A.D. 1620-1628. *ÆTAT.* 21-29

ON the 22d of August 1620 Oliver Cromwell was married to Elizabeth Bourchier, in St. Giles's, Cripplegate, in London—the church where fifty-four years later John Milton was buried. In this year Milton, aged twelve, entered as scholar at St. Paul's School. Oliver was twenty-one years and four months old on his wedding-day. His wife, who was one year older, was a daughter of Sir James Bourchier, a knight and wealthy merchant of Tower Hill, London, having an estate at Felsted in Essex, where he ordinarily resided. The Bourchiers of the city, we are told, were in no way related to the feudal Bourchiers, Earls of Essex, nor to Sir John Bourchier, one of the king's judges. Little is known of the family, and they do not appear in the history of the time. We are told that the Bourchiers were connections of the Hampdens, and that Oliver owed his wife to the introduction of his aunt, Elizabeth Hampden.

Her portrait shows us a pleasant, not uncomely woman, with much dignity of expression, very far from a Puritan. We take her to be a quiet, affectionate, sensible woman, without much character or power, un-

willing at first to assume the position in the State which awaited her, but reconciling herself to it without much difficulty, and playing her part in it without scandal or offence.

Three letters of Oliver's to her remain, and one of hers to him. They are affectionate, trustful, and natural; Biblical in phrase. On her side, she complains (unreasonably enough), during his northern campaign, that he does not write more frequently; on his, he protests his public duties. Thirty years after their marriage he can write to her (the day after Dunbar): "Truly, if I love you not too well, I think I err not on the other hand much. Thou art dearer to me than any creature; let that suffice." And she writes to him: "Truly my life is but half a life in your absence." He does not seem to have felt for her judgment the profound veneration that he showed to his mother. We do not gather the impression that she was a woman of much distinction. The lampoons, of course, are as brutal towards her as towards him. She brought up her daughters to be women of good breeding and nice feeling. Nor is there any reason to doubt but that she was a worthy woman, doing her duty to the best of her powers, to husband, children, and friends.

Sir James Bouchier, the father of Mrs. Cromwell, was a man of wealth; but it does not appear what fortune she had. On his side, Oliver Cromwell settled on his wife for her life the parsonage house at Hartford, with the glebe lands and tithes in the county of Huntingdon. To Huntingdon, to his mother's house, he took his bride; and there for eleven years they lived together,—only son, his wife and children, with the

widowed mother and her unmarried daughters. Of this period of his life there is almost no record, save the birth and baptism of his children, until we come to his entrance into public life, when he was sent to Parliament in 1628 to represent the borough of Huntingdon. After one short year of Parliament he returned again to private life, until the re-opening of the great Parliamentary struggle in 1640. The public career of Oliver Cromwell shall be reserved for future chapters. Here are the main outlines of his private life.

In 1631 he sold his paternal estate in Huntingdon and removed to St. Ives, where he leased lands which he farmed for five years. In 1636 he removed to Ely; and there he farmed the lands left to him by his uncle, Sir Thomas Steward. There his mother and sisters rejoined him. Thus, with the short break of the Parliament of 1628-29, the quiet domestic life of Oliver Cromwell continued for twenty years (1620-40), from his marriage in his twenty-second year until his own forty-second year. Here till long past middle age, in this "sequester'd vale of life," he kept the noiseless tenor of his way—

in "his private gardens, where
He lived reservèd and austere."

It seems convenient here, before we enter on the clash of Parliament and war, to collect the few incidents worth noting in the family and personal story of the future Protector. By his wife, Elizabeth Bourchier, Oliver Cromwell had nine children, of whom they reared four sons and four daughters. All, except the youngest, were baptized at Huntingdon. The four sons were all educated at Felsted School, in Essex, the place where

their grandfather lived—a school that reared some famous scholars, and which still flourishes. Robert, the eldest, died there at the age of seventeen. Oliver, the second, was a captain in the Civil War, and died in service at the age of twenty-one. Richard, the third son, succeeded his father as Protector, and died quietly at the age of eighty-six, in the reign of Anne. Henry, the fourth son, served in the war, was Lord Deputy in Ireland, and died in 1674. Of the daughters, Bridget became the wife of General Ireton, and afterwards of General Fleetwood. Elizabeth, married to John Claypole, died four weeks before her father. Mary, married to Lord Fauconberg, she whom Swift knew and called “handsome and like her father,” died at the age of seventy-five. Frances, married to Robert Rich, grandson and heir of the Earl of Warwick, afterwards married Sir John Russell, Baronet, eldest brother of Henry Cromwell’s wife, and died at the age of eighty-two. The widow of the Protector survived him many years, and died in obscurity at the age of seventy-four.

Of these eight children, three—Henry, Bridget, and Frances—left ultimate descendants. Richard, the Protector’s successor, married Dorothy Mayor, of Hursley, and they had nine children, but no grandchildren. Henry, the Protector’s fourth son, married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Francis Russell, Baronet, of Chippenham, by whom he had seven children. Their descendants were numerous and are still flourishing. The male line was continued down to living memory. Oliver Cromwell, the last male descendant of that name, died in 1821; and his daughter, Elizabeth Oliveria Russell, who died in 1849, was the last descendant of the Pro-

tector born a Cromwell. The descendants in the female line, both of Henry and of Bridget, are still plentiful. Frances, the youngest child of the Protector, by her second husband, Sir John Russell, Baronet, of Chippenham, had five children. From these there are still descendants of the Protector in the female lines too numerous to recount, and in families of the highest rank. [See Appendix A.]

Four of the five sisters of Oliver in these quiet years married men of their own rank and position. Margaret married Colonel Valentine Walton, one of Charles I.'s judges. Anna became Mrs. Sewster; her daughter married Sir William Lockhart. Catherine married Colonel Jones, another of the king's judges, and himself afterwards executed. Jane married General Desborough, one of the generals of the Commonwealth. Robina married Dr. French, and afterwards Dr. Wilkins, Bishop of Chester, one of the founders of the Royal Society; her daughter married Archbishop Tillotson.

What manner of man in all these years was the unknown great captain and ruler? Three qualities especially stand out. Deep family affection; tenderness towards sufferers; Bible religion. Every fragment of record from his private life tells one or other of these. In the range of great characters in history there are some in whom the passion for social justice burned as keenly as in Cromwell; but there are few, indeed, in whom the family affections nourish a spirit so pure in the midst of distracting public duties to the last hour of an over-burdened life. There is certainly no ruler since Saint Louis in whom the personal communion with God is a consciousness so vivid and habitual.

"He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure," wrote John Maidston. Long before he was known to the nation, he was marked in his own country as the friend of the suffering and oppressed; he did "exceed in tenderness towards sufferers." His house became the refuge of persecuted ministers; he stoutly maintained their cause, and strove to secure them their stipends. His farming, the Royalist writers tell us, suffered from his habit of gathering his labourers twice a day around him, and praying with them, and discoursing to them. For years before the Civil War the future Protector of the Commonwealth had become known far and wide as the village-Hampden with the dauntless breast.

Of Cromwell's love for his wife and for his mother we have spoken. To his wife he writes in his Scotch campaign:—

"Thou art dearer to me than any creature. . . . Pray for me; truly I do daily for thee and the dear Family. . . . My love to the dear little ones; I pray for grace for them. I thank them for their Letters; let me have them often. . . . If Dick Cromwell and his Wife be with you, my dear love to them. I pray for them: they shall, God willing, hear from me. I love them very dearly.—Truly I am not able as yet to write much. I am weary; and rest, Thine,

To Bridget Ireton he writes (he forty-seven, she twenty-two):—

"Who ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, without some sense of self, vanity, and badness? Who ever tasted that graciousness of His, and could go less [become weaker] in desire—less than pressing after full enjoyment? Dear Heart, press on; let not Husband, let not anything cool thy affections after Christ. I hope he will be an occasion to inflame them. That which is best worthy of love in thy Husband is

that of the image of Christ he bears. Look on that, and love it best, and all the rest for that. I pray for thee and him ; do so for me."

Bridget Ireton and Elizabeth Claypole were apparently the daughters of his deepest confidence. But it is on his poor son, Richard, that the father's care seems chiefly bestowed. With regard to Richard he had no illusions. The father well knew the feebleness, indolence, the lightness of nature of the son. Yet he is continually stirring him to better things, seeking to place him under the highest influences. To Richard Mayor, Richard Cromwell's father-in-law, on the son's marriage, he writes (1649):—

"I have delivered my son up to you ; and I hope you will counsel him : he will need it ; and, indeed, I believe he likes well what you say, and will be advised by you. I wish he may be serious ; the times require it."

Again he writes to Mayor :—

"I have committed my Son to you ; pray give him advice. I envy him not his contents ; but I fear he should be swallowed up in them. I would have him mind and understand Business, read a little History, study the Mathematics and Cosmography :—these are good, with subordination to the things of God. Better than Idleness, or mere outward worldly contents. These fit for Public services, for which a man is born."

To his son, Richard, he writes, during the fierce campaign in Ireland :—

"DICK CROMWELL—I take your Letters kindly: I like expressions when they come plainly from the heart, and are not strained nor affected.

"I am persuaded it's the Lord's mercy to place you where you are : I wish you may own it and be thankful, fulfilling all relations to the glory of God. Seek the Lord and His

face continually—let this be the business of your life and strength, and let all things be subservient and in order to this! You cannot find nor behold the face of God but in Christ; therefore labour to know God in Christ; which the Scripture makes to be the sum of all, even Life Eternal. Because the true knowledge is not literal or speculative; but inward; transforming the mind to it. . . .

“Take heed of an inactive vain spirit! Recreate yourself with Sir Walter Raleigh’s *History*; it’s a body of History, and will add much more to your understanding than fragments of Story.—Intend to understand the Estate I have settled; it’s your concernment to know it all, and how it stands. I have heretofore suffered much by too much trusting others. I know my Brother Mayor will be helpful to you in all this.

“You will think, perhaps, I need not advise you To love your Wife! The Lord teach you how to do it;—or else it will be done ill favourably. Though Marriage be no instituted Sacrament; yet where the undefiled bed is, and love, this union aptly resembles ‘that of’ Christ and His Church. If you can truly love your Wife, what ‘love’ doth Christ bear to His Church and every poor soul therein—who ‘gave Himself’ for it, and to it!—Commend me to your Wife; tell her I entirely love her, and rejoice in the goodness of the Lord to her. I wish her everyway fruitful. I thank her for her loving Letter.” . . .

Three times that great heart was wrung with agony on the death of a beloved child. Robert, his eldest son, named after Oliver’s own father, died in his eighteenth year at Felsted, May 1639. The parish register still records (one thinks in the words dictated by the father), *Et Robertus fuit criminè pius juvenis, Deum timens supra multos*.—“Now Robert was a youth of singular piety, fearing God more than ordinary.” Nineteen years afterwards, fresh from his daughter’s deathbed, almost on his own deathbed, the broken-hearted father recurred again to this his first great loss. He had read to him those

verses in Philippians which end: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Phil. iv. 13); and then he said: "This Scripture did once save my life; when my eldest son died; which went as a dagger to my heart, indeed it did." Again, death struck down his second son, Oliver, who died of smallpox at Newport Pagnell, just before Marston. To this loss he seems to recur in the noble letter to Colonel Walton on the field of Marston Moor reporting the death of his son in battle. "Sir, God hath taken away your eldest son. . . . Sir, you know my own trials in this way, but the Lord supported me with this, that the Lord took him into the happiness we all pant for and live for."

The third great loss, the most cruel of all, undoubtedly hastened the Protector's end. On the 6th of August 1658 his favourite daughter, Elizabeth Claypole, died. "She had great sufferings," we are told, "great exercises of spirit." Thurloe writes: "For the last fourteen days his Highness has been by her bedside at Hampton Court, unable to attend to any public business whatever. . . . It was observed that his sense of her outward misery in the pains she endured, took deep impression on him; who, indeed, was ever a most indulgent and tender father." And then a few days after came that outburst of grief as he thought of the death of his first-born. In three weeks more he was dying himself. For the thirty-eight years of his married life, Cromwell was all that a loving husband and father could be: overflowing with affection, even on the battlefield, and in the stress of affairs; indulgent, but not weak; considerate, provident, just; counselling, reproving, exhorting; yearning to lead his children to feel his own intense sense of God's presence.

The passages from his letters already given are enough to show how profoundly Cromwell's nature was saturated with Biblical theology. He was a Puritan of the Puritans; full of the dominant idea of personal salvation by faith; his whole imagination and speech were steeped in the language of the Bible, as expounded by Calvin. Never were the thought and the expression of any people more powerfully transformed than were the thought and language of England by the translation of the Bible. The issue of the Authorised Version, and still more the multiplication of portable editions of Scripture, affected our people as hardly any book in the world ever affected a nation. The years of Cromwell's life exactly kept pace with the growth, culmination, and waning of this first intense influence. In the next century England had a large and rich printed literature. But in Cromwell's youth the Catholic manuals had been thrust out, and English literature as yet was not, or was not yet open to the people. The Bible was almost the sole poetry, the sole morality, the sole religion, familiar to all and accessible in print. Its mighty imagery, its majestic utterances as to man's soul and God's power, its mystical ecstasy, its scheme of sin and death, of future life and judgment, of man's vileness, and the nothingness of this transitory life, wrought into the core of the finest and deepest natures of the age. Milton, Lucy Hutchinson, have given us a measure of this spirit in its beauty and harmony. Fox and Bunyan give us a sense of its mysticism and its passion. But no man in that age drank it into his whole nature with more intense reality than did Cromwell.

It is very hard for any of us to-day rightly to grasp

all this. There are still Bible Christians, not a few: men and women, to whom the Word of God is ever ringing in their ears, day and night continually; to whom every word, thought, and act, of themselves as of others, is felt to be, moment by moment, an irrevocable step to a real heaven or to a real hell. But they who so live are the few. The world around them visibly goes on with no such absorbing sense of God's purposes and God's judgments. They live in a world of their own; puzzled, half-paralysed, hoping all things, believing all things, but not outwardly triumphant. The social and mental environment round them is visibly alien to the kingdom of heaven in which they hope and believe; wherein they move and have their being. And not a few of us find mental, moral, historical obstacles in the way of any such Biblical belief, or Biblical hopes; and we are not struck dead, nor are we branded and pilloried, nor even are we outcasts and strangers; but we are the dear friends, children, parents, brothers, and sisters of those who live by the Gospel alone.

But in the lifetime of Oliver Cromwell the society in which he lived had absorbed to the depths of their souls this Biblical conception of life. Their Bible was literally food to their understanding and a guide to their conduct. They saw the visible finger of God in every incident of life; they heard the authentic voice of God in every turn of existence. They saw Satan in everything evil, and heard the noise of devils in all that was harmful, vicious, or unjust. If they took counsel of each other of their own judgment, they literally believed that God and His angels prompted every thought. If one seemed to them just and useful, he was beloved of

God; if one seemed to do harm, he was hated of God. If they were undecided, they sought God. If they felt confidence, they had found God. If they felt hopeless, they had lost God. To be living an honest life was simply to be conscious of unbroken communion with God's spirit. Now that which in our day devout men and women come to feel in their earnest moments of prayer, the devout Puritan felt, as a second nature, in his rising up and in his lying down; in the marketplace and in the home, in society and business; in Parliament, in council, and on the field of battle. He felt in the full tide of daily life what pious men now feel on their knees and on their deathbed.

And feeling this, the Puritan had no shame in uttering it, in the very words of the Bible wherein he had learned so to feel; nay, he would have burned with shame had he faltered in using those words. It is very hard for us now to grasp what this implies. After a few generations the Biblical terms ceased to sound as the very words in which God had spoken, but grew to be mere customary phrases; they became the dialect of an order of men; they grew to be a fashion; they were imitated; and soon withered up into a *cant*. But there was a generation in which this phraseology was the natural speech of men, to whom the Bible was their sole literature, poetry, and religion. Oliver Cromwell grew to manhood in the very centre of that generation. Towards the close of his life that Biblical language was already the external shibboleth of a sect. He had not that sense of poetic harmony which prevented Milton from adopting it. That he chose to retain it through life has heavily weighted his memory, and has retarded by centuries the understand-

ing of his character. From manhood to his deathbed Oliver Cromwell used no other English, spoken or written, save the Biblical dialect. To him it was no dialect; but the literal assertion of truths which he felt to the roots of his being. When Cromwell wrote "Here is the hand of God," he literally did think the Creator of all things had so appointed it to be. When he "sought the Lord," he did literally believe himself to be in communion with God, to be receiving His direct command. When he said that "God had given them the victory," he meant this in its literal sense, as fully as did Joshua or Moses. It is a melancholy thought that the utterances of the most sincere of men in the innocence of their hearts should now be repulsive to us, simply because insincere men chose to imitate their words, and to build up into a cant what was once heartfelt truthfulness.

This is not the place to pass judgment on the Puritan's way of using his Bible, or his general scheme of religion. It is sufficient for us that Oliver Cromwell accepted it wholly: in its narrowness and its strength, with all its good, and not a little of its evil. Few men in our age look on every circumstance of their daily lives as arranged by an inexhaustible set of special providences; nor do they think every impulse which crosses their minds to be the work of direct inspiration. To the modern psychologist this singular type of theological exaltation amounts in effect to the kindling into intense activity the whole moral nature. This ecstatic communion with God in practice resulted in a hyper-æsthesia of the conscience and the will. The zealot who felt himself in hourly communion with the Divine will was really consulting his own highest standard of the Just

and the True. When he sought God, he was probing his understanding to its depths. When he had found assurance, his resolve was fixed down to the very roots of his soul. And thus it depended very much on the zealot's own nature whether the result was good or bad. A great and wise man had his greatness and his sagacity intensified, for his own soul was transfigured to himself. A man of self-reliance had his will heated to a white heat, for he knew himself to be the chosen instrument to work out the decrees of the Almighty. The brave man became insensible to any form of danger; the unselfish man became the type of self-devotion; the compassionate man boiled with hate of whatever was unjust, whatever gave pain. And so the cruel man lost all trace of human pity; the selfish man lost all shame; the self-sufficient man treated all who opposed him as the enemies of God; the hypocrite found ready to his hand a whole apparatus of deceit; the traitor found current a complete code of villainy. It is for this reason that Puritanism and the Puritans have often been described in the language of extravagant praise and extravagant blame. The greater Puritans deserved the praise; the worse deserved the blame. It was a form of belief which could bring out all the good and all the evil of the heart. It made some noble natures heroic; it made some base natures devilish. Men may doubt if the good or the evil preponderated in the scheme as a whole. Men can hardly doubt that it infused into the greater natures which it mastered, a solemnity and a power such as have but once or twice been equalled in the whole history of mankind.

The Calvinistic theology did not sink into Cromwell's

soul without a great shock to his character and health. Bunyan has left us a memorable picture of the first consciousness of sin. "My sins," he says, "did so offend the Lord, that even in my childhood He did scare and affright me with fearful dreams, and did terrify me with dreadful visions." Cromwell, we are told, had been given to visions from his childhood; and this mood seems to have deepened in manhood into a religious form of hypochondria. Sir Philip Warwick tells us that Dr. Simcott, Cromwell's physician at Huntingdon, assured him, "that for many years his Patient was a most splenetick man, and had phansyes about the cross in that town; and that he had been called up to him at midnight and such unreasonable hours very many times, upon a strong phansy, which made him believe he was then dying"; and Sir Philip gives the common story of his conversion, and says that, "he joyned himself to men of his own temper, who pretended unto transports and revelations." And it is thought that this is confirmed by an entry in the diary of Sir Theodore Mayerne, the famous Court physician, who prescribed (15th September 1628) for "Mons. Cromwell, *valde melancholicus*."

Into this religious melancholy of his we have a profound insight by that memorable letter to his cousin, Mrs. St. John (October 1638):—

"Truly no poor creature hath more cause to put himself forth in the cause of his God than I. I have had plentiful wages beforehand; and I am sure I shall never earn the least mite. The Lord accept me in His Son, and give me to walk in the light,—and give us to walk in the light, as He is the light! He it is that enlighteneth our blackness, our darkness. I dare not say, He hideth His face from me. He giveth me to see light in His

light. One beam in a dark place hath exceeding much refreshment in it :—blessed be His Name for shining upon so dark a heart as mine ! You know what my manner of life hath been. Oh, I lived in and loved darkness, and hated light ; I was a chief, the chief of sinners. This is true : I hated godliness, yet God had mercy on me. O the riches of His mercy ! Praise Him for me :—that He who hath begun a good work would perfect it in the day of Christ."

Thus passed the years of Cromwell's private life in his native town and county—in the rearing of a large family of children ; in farming his paternal acres ; in gathering round him the golly, the labouring, and the afflicted ; in intimacy with the Hampdens, St. Johns, and many other Puritan families of his kindred ; in service as borough magistrate and bailiff ; in maintaining the cause of the "lecturers" and other preachers of the Gospel ; in melancholy communings of soul, amidst the lonely reaches of the sluggish Ouse, as to the Judgment to come and the state of this land on earth.

What was the outward man in whom this spirit dwelt ? Of few persons in history has the portraiture been preserved in a way more perfect and authentic. He had a tall, powerful frame, strong of limb, well knit, somewhat heavy. A large square head, and a countenance massive, and far from refined, his enemies said, swollen and red. That face has been preserved for us in the portraits of Cooper, Walker, Faithorne, and Lely ; in all with singular resemblance. [See Appendix B.] Of them all Cooper was the most successful. No human countenance recorded is more familiar to us than that broad, solid face with the thick and prominent red nose ; the heavy gnarled brow, with its historic wart ; eyes firm, penetrating, sad ; square jaw and close-set mouth ;

scanty tufts of hair on lip and chin ; long, loose brown locks flowing down in waves on to the shoulder. His whole air breathing energy, firmness, passion, pity, and sorrow—

“ his face
Deep scars of thunder had intrencht, and care
Sat on his faded cheek, but under brows
Of dauntless courage.”

There is a famous sketch of him, as he first appeared in public, by Sir Philip Warwick, a royalist of sense and not unfair :—

“ The first time that ever I took notice of him was in the very beginning of the Parliament held in November 1640, when I vainly thought myself a courtly young Gentleman (for we Courtiers valued ourselves much upon our good clothes) : I came one morning into the House well clad, and perceived a Gentleman speaking (whom I knew not) very ordinarily apparelled ; for it was a plain cloth-suit, which seemed to have been made by an ill country-tailor ; his linen was plain, and not very clean ; and I remember a speck or two of blood upon his little band, which was not much larger than his collar ; his hat was without a hat-band ; his stature was of a good size, his sword stuck close to his side, his countenance swollen and reddish, his voice sharp and untuneable, and his eloquence full of fervour.” . . .

And Sir Philip goes on to say how he lived to see this very gentleman “ appear of a great and majestic deportment and comely ” presence.

A counterpart to this picture is the Puritan sketch of the Protector, written by John Maidston to Governor Winthrop :—

“ His body was well compact and strong, his stature under six feet (I believe about two inches), his head so shaped as you might see it a storehouse and shop both of a

vast treasury of natural parts. His temper exceeding fiery, as I have known, but the flame of it kept down for the most part, or soon allayed by those moral endowments he had. He was naturally compassionate towards objects in distress, even to an effeminate measure; though God had made him a heart, wherein was left little room for any fear, but what was due to himself, of which there was a large proportion. Yet did he exceed in tenderness towards sufferers. A larger soul, I think, hath seldom dwelt in a house of clay than his was."

Such was the man whom, in his twenty-eighth year, his fellow-citizens of Huntingdon chose to represent them in Parliament—17th March 1628.

The public life of Oliver Cromwell had now begun.

APPENDIX A

It is a curious example of the persistence of the English governing families, and of their close intermarriages, that the blood of Oliver Cromwell still runs through female lines in the veins of the following well-known persons:—Marquis of Ripon, Earls of Chichester, Morley, Clarendon, Cowper, heir-presumptive to the earldom of Derby, Lord Amphil, Lord Walsingham, Countess of Rothes, Mr. Charles Villiers, M.P., Sir John Lubbock, M.P., Sir F. W. Frankland, Sir Charles Strickland, Sir H. E. F. Lewis, Sir W. Worsley, Sir W. Payne Gallwey, the Astleys of Checkers Court, the Polhills of Kent, the Tennants of Glamorganshire, the families of Vyner, Lister, Berners, Nicholas, Gosset, Prescott, Field, Mr. S. R. Gardiner, the historian, etc. During the present century at least seven persons descended from the Protector have held office under the Crown, including one Prime Minister, Lord Goderich; one Foreign Secretary, Lord Clarendon; two Lords-Lieutenant of Ireland, and a Viceroy in India. Amongst those who have married descendants of Cromwell are—the Earls of Darnley, Lytton, Lathom, Lord Stanley of Preston,

Sir W. Harcourt, M.P., Sir A. Borthwick, M.P., Mr. Samuel Whitbread, M.P. The late Sir George Cornewall Lewis, the statesman and author, was a descendant of the Protector; and Lady Theresa Lewis, his wife, author of a work in illustration of Lord Clarendon, was a descendant at once of Oliver the Protector and of Edward Hyde the Chancellor. I am informed by a lady, one of the descendants of the Protector, that it was usual in her family to keep the 30th of January as a day of humiliation and prayer. They were taught as children that an ancestral visitation hung over them, which would certainly overtake them in this world or the next. Some of the Cromwells resumed the name of *Williams* after the Restoration. The arms of the Cromwells, as shown at Hinchinbrook, are *Sable, a lion rampant, argent. Crest, a demi-lion rampant argent, in his dexter gamb a gem-ring, or.* The latter is said to have been granted to Sir Richard Cromwell by Henry VIII., when he gave the knight his diamond ring in reward for splendid feats performed in a tournament before the king. The Protector used this coat and crest, with the motto—*Pax quæritur bello.*

The Cromwells as a family were prolific and long-lived. The Protector's mother died, says Thurloe, at the age of ninety-four, but more probably in her ninetieth year. She had eleven children, the youngest born when she was, at least, in her forty-sixth year. Oliver was born, at earliest, in her thirty-fifth year. Oliver himself had nine children, and thirty grandchildren, of whom at least one lived into the reign of George II. and the ministry of Walpole. Sir Henry Cromwell, the Protector's grandfather, had eleven children, the eldest of whom, Sir Oliver, died in his ninety-third year, also having had eleven children. Elizabeth, the mother of John Hampden, died at the age of ninety. Of Sir Henry Cromwell fifty-two grandchildren are recorded. During the Civil Wars there were no less than six contemporary Oliver Cromwells, all closely related. The "cousinry" of Oliver the Protector is thus an infinite field, for it ramifies into the families of the Hampdens, Barringtons, Whalleys, Trevors, St. Johns, Waltons, Dunches, Everards, Ingoldsbys, Gerards; and includes the families of Earl of Buckinghamshire, Lord Dacre, Lord Hampden, and many more.

APPENDIX B

All the portraits of Cromwell appear to be derived from works by Cooper, Walker, Lely, or Faithorne. Their paintings and drawings, with the medals, seem to be the only portraits taken from life. And a mask was taken after death. Of them all the best is perhaps the large drawing by Cooper, in the house of the master, at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge. Cooper's miniatures are very numerous and are well known,—they seem to have been preferred by the Cromwell family. Evelyn thought the picture by Walker, with the page tying his scarf, so well engraved by Lambert, to be the most striking likeness. There is one main difference in the portraits. Cooper and Lely, whose portraits exactly resemble each other, paint the brows as knit, and somewhat drawn downwards. Walker and Faithorne make the brow high and well arched over the eye. So too does Simon in his medals. Perhaps the bony structure of the forehead was so formed; and the fleshy and movable eyebrows fell down when the face was seen in repose.

The following is an exact description of the features made after careful study of many portraits:—

Eyes: steely blue, keen, penetrating, very sad.

Forehead: very broad, much lined, receding towards the top, nearly in a line with the nose, very prominent fleshy brow, with "the bar of Michael Angelo"—wart over right brow.

Hair: light brown, worn in long curls, early turned ashen gray; very slight, scanty moustache, and tuft on under lip.

Chin: square, solid, but rather receding, fleshy.

Nose: very thick, heavy, prominent, red.

Lips: large, prominent, fleshy, very firmly drawn.

Complexion: weather beaten, coarse, fair and florid.

General Characteristics: energetic, resolute, rough, sympathetic, melancholy, passionate.

Of the embossed head fixed in the halberd-point in the possession of Mr Horace Wilkinson no certain history can

be given. Some competent judges have, on physical grounds, believed it to be genuine ; and it does not seem to disagree with any single feature in the authentic portraits. It is not a skull, but a head, which has been thoroughly embalmed ; severed, after embalming, from the body ; encrusted into an ancient spear-point. It is said to have been secured by a descendant of the Protector from the soldier who was on guard when it fell from the gateway at Westminster Hall, as described by Pepys. But it adds nothing fresh to our knowledge ; and from the nature of the case, it could give us no help in recalling the likeness. The Cromwellian portraits and relics, genuine and spurious, are altogether infinite, and even about the genuine alone a volume might be written.

CHAPTER III

PREPARATION FOR CIVIL WAR

A.D. 1628-1642. ÆTAT. 29-43

IN March 1625 Charles I. began his reign amid joy and hope in the nation. In May he was married to Henrietta Maria, daughter of Henry IV. and sister of Louis XIII., King of France. Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was the absolute ruler of the King of England, as was Richelieu of the King of France. In June Charles met his first Parliament; and the great struggle began between personal Monarchy and Parliamentary government,—a struggle which continued, in a form more or less acute, for nearly one hundred years.

Charles, narrow, obstinate, and imperious, was without that Scotch canniness and turn for compromise which had saved his father in his worst hours. Villiers, equally headstrong and incapable, exaggerated all that in the previous reign had been disastrous and unpopular. The Parliament which met the new king was stronger and more conscious of its strength than any which had preceded it; and in Eliot, Pym, Wentworth, Hampden, Selden, Coke, it possessed men of real power and immense resource. From the first, it refused supplies to assist the projects of Buckingham, and it made the

voting of the necessary expenses of government conditional on its own control over the entire administration of the nation, civil and religious. Directly it attacked Buckingham, after a session of less than two months it was summarily dissolved.

But Charles, overwhelmed by his liabilities and disasters abroad, was forced by his want of money to summon a new Parliament. It met in 1626, only to show a yet more determined resolve to secure ministerial responsibility as the condition of voting supplies. It formally impeached Buckingham; and after a stormy session of three months, was dissolved even more summarily than the last.

For some two years Charles and Buckingham struggled on, raising money as they could by forced loans, by arbitrary arrest, and irregular impositions; sinking from one disaster to another, until the government of the country was reduced to complete disorganisation. The miserable expeditions to Cadiz, to Rhé, the abandonment of the Huguenots of La Rochelle, the failure of all the foreign schemes and illegal exactions at home, drove the nation to the last point of exasperation. All other means of raising money failing, Charles at last consented to summon a third Parliament in 1628. It met on 17th March. It was in this third Parliament of Charles that Oliver Cromwell first entered on public life as member for Huntingdon.

It was one of the most remarkable Parliaments in our history. Those who had opposed the Court, and those who had been imprisoned, were eagerly returned. Pym, Eliot, Wentworth, Hampden, Selden, Coke, and many others of fame in the great struggle were members.

When the House met, its first act was to form a series of committees on Religion, Justice, Grievances, and Trade. It proceeded to deal with the entire range of public affairs, civil and religious, legislative and executive alike. Wentworth, at first its leading spirit, shrank back from the prospect of a real Parliamentary executive, and the lead passed to Eliot and Pym. The Petition of Right was passed—the second great title-deed of popular government. On the 10th March 1629 the House was dissolved, after two stormy sessions of less than five months in all, having taken a memorable step in the great contest—the substitution of Parliamentary for Monarchic government in England.

The substitution of Parliamentary for Personal government in England proved to be a long and singularly complex undertaking. It was not at all secured until the settlement of 1688, and it was not absolutely accepted and developed until the accession of the House of Hanover. But in 1628 the full meaning of the change was imagined by few, and the practical solution of its problems had not crossed the mind of any. None of the conditions, none of the institutions of Parliamentary government, as we now understand it, existed. No one of the greater nations of Europe had attempted anything like it; and, indeed, down to our day, no one of them has organised it into a system. In 1629 the only type of government known to the larger states of Europe was a Personal government directly controlled by an hereditary sovereign, under more or less definite limits, and with more or less representative control as to legislation and taxation. The early Parliaments of Charles did honestly believe that they were maintaining the ancient privileges

of Englishmen and the old rights of the Commons of England. In reality they were doing something very different, and from the first they laid claim to a wholly greater part. They virtually claimed the real sovereignty in all things civil and religious, legislative and executive. They asserted a right to judge, punish, and control almost anything done or spoken in Church or in State; to enforce absolute conformity to a given standard in worship, opinion, and conduct; and, whilst criticising, practically to direct the entire executive authority, military, civil, ecclesiastical, and judicial.

Accustomed as we are to Parliamentary government, we are wont to forget that in the reign of Charles it was impracticable, even if it could be conceived of as an organised system. The vast majority of the nation, and at least three-fourths of the Parliament, knew of no other executive authority than that of the king's majesty, and no other ecclesiastical authority but that of the King and Church. No man had conceived of a king who reigned but did not govern, though many dreamed of a church without rulers. There were no such ideas as that of publicity in administration, as that of an executive responsible for its daily work to Parliament. There was no conception of a ministry sitting in Parliament, doing its ordinary work under the eye of Parliament, and with the help and supervision of Parliament. There was no thought yet of a Cabinet virtually nominated by the majority of the House of Commons, and unable to survive a single adverse vote. Yet without all this Parliamentary government could not exist. And Parliamentary government in this form had not crossed even the lofty and enthusiastic visions of Sir John Eliot.

The part which Cromwell took in this memorable Parliament was a very humble one. He was not thirty when it was dissolved ; but on taking his seat as a young man he found himself amongst friends and relations. John Hampden, then thirty-four, was his first cousin and close friend. Sir Francis Barrington was his uncle by marriage. Sir William Masham of Otes, a neighbour of Sir J. Bouchier in Essex, who married Barrington's daughter, was Oliver's friend through life. And these men were amongst the leaders of the Puritan gentry. But the young member for Huntingdon sat and voted in silence. Once only does he seem to have taken a part in the debates. On 11th February the Committee for Religion, John Pym being in the chair, was discussing the offences of the Bishop of Winchester and others who had supported preachers condemned by the House. Cromwell rose and said that he had heard from Dr. Beard how, when a certain Dr. Alabaster had preached flat popery at Paul's Cross, the Bishop of Winchester, his diocesan, had commanded Dr. Beard to preach nothing to the contrary, and, when he persisted in so preaching, had reprimanded him. The remark was well received by the committee, and the House ordered Dr. Beard to be sent for as a witness, and the summons to be delivered to Mr. Cromwell. By the 24th of February the Resolutions on Religion were ready, but the immediate dissolution of the House put an end to debates. For more than eleven years no Parliament was called.

During these eleven years (1629-40) Cromwell lived quietly amongst his own people, and we may conveniently here set down the simple annals of his private

life. His uncle Richard—godfather, we assume, to the young Richard—died in 1628, and left to Oliver a piece of land in Huntingdon, and nineteen acres of arable land near; but Cromwell was soon to quit Huntingdon for ever. In 1630 a new charter was granted to the borough, and Cromwell, Dr. Beard, and Robert Barnard were named as the justices of the peace. By the new charter the rule of the town was handed over to a mayor, and twelve aldermen appointed for life. The new charter was apparently a triumph for the king's men, and it abolished the old popular election. Cromwell was not slow or measured in remonstrating against the powers it conferred. A complaint was made by petition of the mayor and aldermen against "the disgraceful and unseemly speeches used to" the mayor and Robert Barnard. A warrant was issued, and Cromwell was brought before the Privy Council in November 1630. The affair was committed to the arbitration of the Earl of Manchester, and ended with an apology and a compromise, the charter being amended in three points. Cromwell acknowledged that "he had spoken in heat and passion."

Huntingdon was no longer a place to hold him. In 1631 we find him paying a fine of £10 as compensation for refusing to appear at the king's coronation to be knighted. A few weeks after the award, in May 1631, Cromwell disposed of most of his property there, his mother, his wife, and his uncle Sir Oliver, joining in the deed of sale. He sold the "Augustine Fryers," the house in which he was born, with other houses, and seven acres of land in Huntingdon, and the tithes at Hartford. The sale produced £1800. Hinchinbrook

had been sold four years before for £3000. He did not sell the property which came to him from his uncle Richard. With the proceeds he rented some grazing lands at St. Ives, five miles farther down the river—part of the Slope Hall estate—and here he lived with his family for five years more until 1636. His mother and his unmarried sisters continued to live at Huntingdon, where Oliver's children were baptised down to 1637, and where he still apparently remained a proprietor. Of his life at St. Ives we know nothing. He was naturally occupied in farming; and we fancy it was in the marshy lands there that he contracted his tendency to ague. "He came to church," rumour said, "with a piece of red flannel round his neck, being subject to inflammation." And it was doubtless in these gloomy years that the "phantasies" and the "melancholy" pressed most hardly on his spirit.

In January 1636 Sir Thomas Steward, his mother's brother, died; and thereon, by his uncle's will, and the settlement of his grandfather, William Steward, Cromwell became entitled to considerable property in Ely, said to be worth from £400 to £500 a year, the family house in Ely, and the goodwill to the farming of the tithes under the chapter. To Ely he removed in the course of the year 1636, living in the house still standing next to St. Mary's Church; and here his family remained until their removal to London about 1647. He at once obtained renewal of the leases held by Sir Thomas, and appears from time to time as an active trustee of the local charities and funds.

At Ely, as at St. Ives, we find him actively maintaining the Puritan preachers, and the cause of the poor.

It is from St. Ives, in 1636, that he writes to Mr. Story in London to maintain a lecturer in his county—"they that procure spiritual food, they that build up spiritual temples, they are the men truly charitable, truly pious." It is from Ely, in 1638, that he writes that interesting letter to his cousin, Mrs. St. John. And in Ely, in that year, we find the little note—"Mr. Hand, I doubt not but I shall be as good as my word for your money. I desire you to deliver forty shillings of the town money to this bearer to pay for the physic for Benson's cure. [Benson was an old invalid.] If the gentlemen will not allow it at the time of account, keep this note, and I will pay it out of my own purse."

It was in these years, 1635-38, that the struggle went on about the payment of ship-money. With this he was closely connected. His cousin and friend John Hampden bore the brunt of the contest; his cousin by marriage, Oliver St. John, was Hampden's advocate in the case. Cromwell himself is reported to have also refused to pay, though, perhaps, like so many others, his case was not pressed. About the same time also took place the struggle between the poor people of the fens and the "adventurers" who had reclaimed the Bedford Level. The memoirs tell us that Cromwell took active part with the commoners. If he did so, it was not against the king, but rather against the Earl of Bedford. But we are told that as head of the discontented faction he made himself so well known that Hampden in Parliament afterwards described him "as an active person, and one that would sit well at the mark." With or without reference to this particular incident, in the Long Parliament he bore the nickname of "Lord of the Fens."

The picturesque story that he was about in these years to emigrate to America, and was stopped by an Order in Council, is without any adequate foundation. No emigrants were stopped for more than a few days. Cromwell, like Hampden, at the time was busy with important projects. And it is utterly improbable that they and the leaders of the Commons in their struggle were all about to embark in the same ship, and to abandon their cause together. But the times were gloomy and terrible to men of less nerve and energy.

These eleven years between the Parliaments of 1629 and 1640 had been times of trial. Sir John Eliot and eight members were thrown into the Tower, where in three years Eliot died, the proto-martyr of Parliaments. Wentworth, disgusted with the pretensions of Parliament, passed over to the king; and was soon to become, with Laud, the mainstay of Personal monarchy, by whose means "Thorough" ruled for a season in State and Church. The Star Chamber prosecutions, the ferocious sentences on Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, and Lilburne, illegal fines, arbitrary taxes, the ship-money, followed. Next came the Scotch insurrection and the Covenant of 1638. The Scotch war drove Charles at last to the concession which for eleven years he had resisted. Wentworth, now Earl of Strafford, was summoned from Ireland, and he counselled a Parliament.

It met 13th April 1640; and here Oliver Cromwell was returned as member for Cambridge. The House had hardly assembled when, under the leadership of Pym, instead of voting supplies, it attacked the policy of the king in Church and State. Cromwell's name does not appear in its proceedings. The king dissolved

it in anger on the 5th of May. And thus the Short Parliament, the fourth which Charles had called, was abruptly dismissed after a session of twenty-three days. But a fresh war in Scotland compelled the king within six months to summon a new House.

Everywhere the Court struggled in vain to affect the returns. The efforts of the Lord Keeper were directed to induce the electors of Cambridge to choose his own brother in place of Cromwell. But Cromwell was returned with one of the common council, in place of his former colleague, a courtier. On the 3d of November 1640 Oliver Cromwell took his seat in the fifth Parliament of King Charles, the famous Long Parliament, which lasted for thirteen years, till dismissed by himself in 1653.

This is not the place to tell the story of the most memorable of all English Parliaments. Our concern is with Cromwell. He was now forty-one; he was already a leader amongst Puritans; and he was in close relation with prominent men in the Commons. John Hampden, Oliver St. John, Sir Thomas Barrington, Sir William Masham, Valentine Walton, Edmund Waller, were his connections by marriage. To Pym, the leader of the House, to Vane, Falkland, Hyde, Holles, and Strode, he was well known as an old member. He is no longer the silent observer that he had been in 1628. From the first he takes an active part; sits on many important committees; moves several important bills. But he is in no sense a Parliamentary leader; there is no record of his making a sustained speech; nor does he appear as the chief of a distinct party. His voice was not heard during the great impeachments, or in the great

political debates. His activity is confined almost entirely to matters of religion and the oppression of persons. He is a man of influence, of suggestions, of business experience; but he nowhere appears as the orator, the tactician, or the far-sighted statesman. He does not sit with Pym and the great lawyers, but on the right of the Speaker, near Hyde and Falkland, Strode and Pennington. So far as he acts with any section it is rather with Pennington, Puritan member for the city, with Vane, Strode, and Henry Marten, the "root-and-branch" men. He abstains strictly from all debates where law, precedent, tactics are essential. His sole concern is misgovernment, corruption, and conscience.

On the third day of the session, after Pym and Hampden had uttered their great indictment of the Government, Cromwell presented the petition of John Lilburne, who had been cruelly punished by the Star-Chamber. He was appointed on the committee to consider the cases of Leighton, Prynne, Burton, Bastwick, and other victims of Laud. It was then that we have the notice of Sir Philip Warwick, already cited: "He aggravated the imprisonment of this man by the council-table unto that height that one would believe the very Government itself had been in great danger by it. I sincerely profess it lessened much my reverence unto that great council, for he was very much hearkened unto."

Within the first ten months of the Long Parliament Cromwell was specially appointed to eighteen committees, besides those on which he sat as representing Cambridge. The most important matters came before several of those committees, and the cases of most of the

sufferers from the Star-Chamber. There was another case of alleged oppression referred to one of these committees, of which Hyde, the Chancellor, has given us his own version. Lord Manchester had a dispute with some commoners of Huntingdon about a recent enclosure, which resulted in a riot, and writs were issued. Cromwell vehemently urged the case of the poor inhabitants; it was referred to a committee of which Hyde was chairman. Lord Clarendon relates that Cromwell enlarged on the evidence "with great passion"; that "in great fury" he reproached the chairman with being partial, that he bullied the witnesses, and attacked Lord Mandeville with indecency and rudeness. In the end his whole carriage was so tempestuous, and his behaviour so insolent, that the chairman was obliged to reprehend him: which Cromwell never forgave. How far all this is exaggeration we cannot now say. Cromwell and Lord Mandeville were intimate friends. And Clarendon's memory was notoriously defective, especially in all that related to himself and his opponents.

There are three great occasions where we find Cromwell in the front. Within a few weeks of the opening of Parliament, Alderman Pennington presented a petition signed by 15,000 citizens of London, calling for the abolition of Episcopacy, with all its *roots and branches*. When the debate on it came on, Pennington justified the petition, and said that he could have had fifteen times 15,000 signatures, and Cromwell eagerly intervened in the debate. He was himself interrupted with loud calls "to the bar." But, Pym and Holles supporting him, he insisted on his argument; which was "that he was more convinced of the irregularity of

bishops than even before, because, like the Roman hierarchy, they would not endure to have their condition come to a trial." The matter ended for the moment in a compromise. But here, in Episcopacy, was sounded the critical note, which ultimately rallied to the king so large a portion of the people and the gentry. From that hour the king represented the Church.

The second occasion is when, on 30th December 1640, Cromwell moved the second reading of Strode's Bill for Annual Parliaments. It was referred to a select committee, on which sat Cromwell, Pym, Hampden, Strode, St. John, Holles, Selden, Barrington, Whitelocke, and others. The Bill was extremely defective from a constitutional point of view; but it ultimately took shape as the Triennial Act, one of the most important statutes of the Long Parliament. And the cardinal principle of the Annual Bill was ultimately embodied in the Bill of Rights.

The third great occasion where we find Cromwell prominent is where he prepares with Vane the Bill for the Abolition of Episcopacy, the measure which finally drove Hyde into the party of the Court. It is for the downfall of Episcopacy of the Laudian type, and for the defence of Puritanism, that Cromwell is chiefly noticed as a member of Parliament. He sits on the committee on the "Bill for the Abolishing of Superstition and Idolatry"; on the committee to consider how preaching ministers may be set up and maintained. Mr. Cromwell moves "to take some course to turn the Papists out of Dublin"; and on his motion it was ordered "that sermons should be in the afternoon in all parishes in England." But for the Church of England, but for

Puritanism, the Civil War would have been a short affair, even if it ever had begun. The Long Parliament was already assuming the absolute control of public worship, and that in a definitely Presbyterian spirit. Cromwell, who burned with indignation against Laud and Popery, little saw how this claim of the Commons would prove one of his own greatest difficulties as a ruler.

But though for twelve more years this Parliament continued its bills, motions, and debates, Cromwell appears in it henceforth only in urgent matters of practical kind. The Parliament as a legislature had ceased to exist. It was a committee of safety of the nation charged with the duty of forcing the king to submit. Thus at least Cromwell viewed it. His vehemence led the Commons to take up the Grand Remonstrance, which was virtually a summons to the nation to action. It was he who on 6th November 1641 carried a resolution to give the Earl of Essex power from both Houses to command upon all occasions the trained bands on that side of Trent for the defence of the kingdom, and "*that this power should continue until the Parliament should take further order.*" Here is the first suggestion of a Parliamentary army.

On 22d November took place the final debate on the Remonstrance, which was virtually the call to arms. We know already how vehemently Cromwell threw himself into the measure. It was one of the most memorable scenes that have ever passed in the House. Wild with excitement and party fury—the majority had been but eleven—the members drew their swords; and but for the serene good sense of Hampden, they seemed likely to fight out the Civil War on the floor of the House.

When, after sixteen hours of debate, at four in the morning, they passed out, Falkland asked Cromwell (we are told by Clarendon) if there had been a debate or not. "I will take your word for it, again," said he. "If the Remonstrance had been rejected, I would have sold all I had the next morning, and never have seen England any more; and I know there are many other honest men of this same resolution." The memory of Clarendon is quite untrustworthy. But some such conversation did probably pass. The failure of the Remonstrance would have been a different thing from the tyranny of the king. It would have meant that a majority of the Commons accepted Monarchy and Church, and Cromwell may have turned his thoughts to the New World, as did Lord Brooke and others, and probably Hampden.

The news of the Irish Rebellion and massacre, enormously exaggerated as it was, reached London in November, and stimulated the passions of all. The ferment broke out in continual riots; arms were drawn on both sides; and bands of men came trooping into London. In January 1642 the king made his ill-starred attempt to seize the five members; on 10th January he left Whitehall, never to return a king. In February Cromwell offers £500 towards the service of the Commonwealth, his cousin Hampden subscribing £1000. In July blood was drawn. In the same month Cromwell sent down arms to Cambridge, expended £100 of his own in that service, and moved to raise in Cambridge two companies of volunteers. In August he seized the magazine in the Castle of Cambridge, and secured the University plate, worth £20,000,

which was being sent to the king. The House passed an indemnity, and repaid the money he had expended in arming the town. Cromwell was, in fact, committed to acts of treason and war. He, who nine months before had first suggested that a Parliamentary army should be formed under Essex, who in the interval had been rousing his own constituents to arm, was the first to strike a blow in the coming combat. The Civil War had now begun. For the next nine years his life is that of a soldier.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST CIVIL WAR

EDGEHILL—THE EASTERN ASSOCIATION—MARSTON MOOR

A.D. 1642-1644. *ÆTAT.* 43-45

ON the 22d of August 1642, in cloud and storm, King Charles planted the royal standard on the castle rock of Nottingham, and formally opened the Civil War. He soon found himself at the head of an army of 10,000, led by men trained in the Dutch and German wars. Prince Rupert, a born *sûrleur*, now just twenty three, was made General of the Horse. Another skilled soldier the Earl of Lindsey, was named Commander-in Chief. But the king's army was a motley body, and he was swayed by varying counsels. Side by side stood great nobles and gallant gentlemen, who had armed their retainers and tenants, soldiers of fortune, heroic spirits like the Verneys and Falkland, reprobates like Goring, and dissolute idlers both from town and country. There was little or no regular discipline, and a constantly shifting system of command. Charles, who in war as in peace could trust no man and adopt no counsel without secret reserves and constant vacillation, listened by turns to the groups which surrounded him—skilled tacticians, fiery swordsmen, acute statesmen, intriguers,

desperadoes, and lastly, his evil spirit, his beloved, dauntless, wrong-headed wife.

The army of the Parliament was soon assembled round Northampton, where it mustered to the number of 20,000 men. Its commander was Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, son of Elizabeth's attainted favourite, now chief of the Parliamentary nobles, a Puritan, and a soldier trained in the foreign wars. Sincere, brave, honourable, diligent, but weak and utterly dull, he mistook his great position for capacity, and never learned how incompetent he was for all but moderate undertakings. His task was indeed not slight. The Parliamentary army, though twice as numerous, was no less heterogeneous than that of the king; it was hardly more disciplined; it had fewer officers trained to war, and fewer soldiers inured to arms. Its cavalry was inferior in equipment and skill to the dashing horsemen who followed Rupert. And though a goodly proportion were earnest Puritans, full of courage and devotion, both troops of horse and regiments of foot were largely made up of mere holiday soldiers, without character, heart, or knowledge of their business. On both sides there were germs of a splendid army, but both as yet were the musters of armed citizens, with ignorance, carelessness, and ruffianism in nearly equal degrees, with some heroes and many vagabonds.

In wealth, in numbers, and in cohesion the Parliament was stronger than the king. To him there had rallied most of the greater nobles, many of the lesser gentry, some proportion of the richer citizens, the townsmen of the west, and the rural population generally of the west and north of England. For the Parliament

stood a strong section of the peers and greater gentry, the great bulk of the lesser gentry, the townsmen of the richer parts of England, the whole eastern and home counties, and lastly, the city of London. But as the Civil War did not sharply divide classes, so neither did it geographically bisect England. Roughly speaking, aristocracy and peasantry, the Church, universities, the world of culture, fashion, and pleasure were loyal: the gentry, the yeomanry, trade, commerce, morality, and law inclined to the Parliament. Broadly divided, the north and west went for the king; the south and east for the Houses; but the lines of demarcation were never exact: cities, castles, and manor-houses long held out in an enemy's county. There is only one permanent limitation. Draw a line from the Wash to the Solent. East of that line the country never yielded to the king; from first to last it never failed the Parliament. Within it are enclosed Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Bedford, Bucks, Herts, Middlesex, Surrey, Kent, Sussex. This was the wealthiest, the most populous, and the most advanced portion of England. With Gloucester, Reading, Bristol, Leicester, and Northampton, it formed the natural home of Puritanism.

For two years the Civil War drags on its varying course, with cruel waste in blood, treasure, and general well-being. As is usually seen with citizen armies commanded by civilian officers, bloody encounters lead to no results; one wing in a battle is in flight whilst the other is pursuing a defeated enemy; victorious armies mysteriously melt away, and independent generals fight for their own hand. Though the king had more competent leaders and more efficient troopers than the

Parliament, his own caprice and presumption, and the lawless spirits around him, continually destroyed his prospects of success. On the other side, the local and temporary character of the Parliamentary levies, the want of military habits and skilled leaders, the disorganisation inherent in a civilian army, controlled by a civilian committee, led to the failure of expeditions more numerous and better found than those of the king. In spite of noble efforts and much individual heroism, the cause of the Parliament on the whole lost ground, until, after two years of fighting, it held little more than a third of the kingdom. From this imminent peril it was rescued by Marston Moor and the New Model.

It is no part of this work to narrate the incidents of the Civil War, with all its inevitable misery, waste, and failure. The business before us is the work of Oliver Cromwell. First he is captain of a troop, like himself yeomen and farmers who had girt on the sword for conscience' sake; then colonel of a regiment; soon general of a corps of cavalry; at last leader of an army. Steadily the discipline and fervour of his troop spread to the rest; till he organises the armies of the Parliament on the "Model" of which his own troop was the germ; and ultimately he is the commander-in-chief of armies, of which he is himself the soul—armies which in discipline, valour, and perfection of all martial qualities have never been surpassed in the annals of war.

The army of the Parliament was on paper about 20,000 foot and 5000 horse, there being twenty regiments of infantry and seventy-five troops of horse, each troop counting sixty sabres, raised and equipped by its

own captain. Oliver Cromwell was captain of the 67th troop, with his brother-in-law, John Desborough, as quartermaster. His eldest son Oliver was cornet in the 8th troop; his future son-in-law, Henry Ireton, was captain of the 58th troop. His cousin, John Hampden, was colonel of the 20th regiment of foot; his neighbour, Lord Mandeville, afterwards Earl of Manchester, was colonel of the 10th. His brother-in-law, Valentine Walton, was captain of the 73d troop, with Valentine the younger as cornet. Edward Whalley, his cousin, was cornet in the 60th troop. Cromwell was thus surrounded in the field by his relations, friends, and political colleagues. On the 13th of September he was ordered to muster his troop and to join the Earl of Essex.

The war opened as civil wars do: gallant skirmishes, inexplicable panics, ill-judged expeditions, and aimless marching to and fro. The first battle of the war revealed the strength and the weakness of both armies. Essex, as he followed Charles on the march to London, unexpectedly, and with but part of his force, came up with the king at Edgehill in Warwickshire. The battle began late in the afternoon of Sunday, the 23d of October. Charles was superior in numbers, in artillery, in cavalry, and in position. Rupert, on the right wing, charging furiously, and, aided by treachery, routed and drove the left wing of Essex into Kineton, where, falling to plunder, he was in turn driven out by the arrival of Hampden and a strong rear-guard. The king's left wing also routed part of the right wing of Essex, who, believing the day lost, seized a pike and prepared to die on foot at the head of his regiment. But as the entire

royal cavalry were pursuing and plundering far from the main battle, the day was restored to the Parliament by their horse on the right wing. Here were thirteen unbroken troops, of which one was that of Cromwell. Dashing into the royal infantry they destroyed one regiment after another; and acting with the remnants of Essex's foot, they cut to pieces the king's red guards, took his standard, killing Sir Edmund Verney, his standard-bearer, and the Earl of Lindsey, the late commander-in-chief. But two of his regiments remained on the field; and Charles, with his sons, was in imminent danger of capture.

At this moment Rupert and the cavalry, returning in confusion from pursuit and their combat with Hampden, found their army a rout, but they were still strong enough to save the remnants. Night closed the fight. About 4000 men lay on the bloody field, the loss of the king being greatest both in numbers and quality. It was a drawn battle, from which neither side reaped any gain. Its only result was to show first the radical unsteadiness of the Parliamentary army, the disorganisation of the king's command, his weakness in infantry, the recklessness of Rupert, and the splendid material in the Puritan regiments and troops. Essex, Stapylton, Lord Brooke, and Cromwell were especially mentioned as leaders "who never stirred from their troops; but they and their troops fought bravely till the last minute of the fight." It was the Puritan regiments of Essex, of Holles, and the troops raised in the eastern counties, which had saved a lost battle and destroyed the king's infantry.

The eye of a soldier would see in that first trial all

the perils and all the hopes of the situation. And a great soldier was there. It was about this time, probably a little before Edgehill, that there took place between Cromwell and Hampden the memorable conversation which fifteen years afterwards the Protector related in a speech to his second Parliament. It is a piece of autobiography so instructive and so pathetic that it must be set forth in full in the words of Cromwell himself :—

“I was a person who, from my first employment, was suddenly preferred and lifted up from lesser trusts to greater ; from my first being a Captain of a Troop of Horse. . . . I had a very worthy Friend then ; and he was a very noble person, and I know his memory is very grateful to all. — Mr. John Hampden. At my first going out into this engagement, I saw our men were beaten at every hand. . . . ‘Your troops,’ said I, ‘are most of them old decayed serving-men, and tapsters, and such kind of fellows ; and,’ said I, ‘their troops are gentlemen’s sons, younger sons and persons of quality : do you think that the spirits of such base mean fellows will ever be able to encounter gentlemen, that have honour and courage and resolution in them ?’ Truly I did represent to him in this manner conscientiously ; and truly I did tell him : ‘You must get men of a spirit : and take it not ill what I say, — I know you will not, — of a spirit that is likely to go on as far as gentlemen will go : or else you will be beaten still.’ I told him so ; I did truly. He was a wise and worthy person ; and he did think that I talked a good notion, but an impracticable one. . . . I raised such men as had the fear of God before them, as made some conscience of what they did ; and from that day forward, I must say to you, they were never beaten, and wherever they were engaged against the enemy, they beat continually. And truly this is a matter of praise to God : and it hath some instruction in it, To own men who are religious and godly.”

The issue of the whole war lay in that word. It lay

with "such men as had some conscience in what they did." "From that day forward they were never beaten." The history of the formation of these Puritan armies is too important to be passed ; and it has been described for us by contemporaries both friendly and hostile. Baxter says :—

"He has a special care to get religious men into his troop : these men were of greater understanding than common soldiers, . . . and making not money, but that which they took for the public felicity, to be their end, they were the more engaged to be valiant ; as far as I could learn, they never once ran away before an enemy. Hereupon he got a commission to take some care of the associated counties, where he brought this troop into a double regiment of fourteen full troops [840 men] ; and all these as full of religious men as he could get. These having more than ordinary wit and resolution, had more than ordinary success."

Whitelocke says :—

"He had a brave regiment of horse of his countrymen, most of them freeholders and freeholders' sons, and who upon matter of conscience engaged in this quarrel, and under Cromwell. And thus being well armed within by the satisfaction of their own consciences, and without, by good iron arms, they would as one man stand firmly and charge desperately."

Cromwell, who turned out as a mere captain of yeomanry, with no more knowledge of war than the ordinary drill of the train-bands, acquired his knowledge of the soldier's art from Captain John Dalbier, a veteran of Dutch extraction, who had seen service abroad. We are told that he would diligently drill his troopers, instructing them in the handling of their weapons and the management of their horses. "As an officer," says

Waller, "he was obedient, and did never dispute my orders or argue upon them."

Memorable indeed is the impression produced by these men on the imagination of their countrymen. On both sides the memoirs and journals record their iron discipline, their fiery zeal, their desperate courage:—

" . . . Led in fight, yet leader seemed
Each warrior single as in chief, expert
When to advance, or stand, or turn the sway
Of battle, open when, and when to close
The ridges of grim war ; no thought of flight,
None of retreat, no unbecoming deed
That argued fear ; each on himself relied,
As only in his arm the moment lay
Of victory ; deeds of eternal fame
Were done, but infinite ; for wide was spread
That war and various."

"As for Colonel Cromwell," writes a news-letter of May 1643, "he hath 2000 brave men, well disciplined ; no man swears but he pays his twelve-pence ; if he be drunk, he is set in the stocks, or worse ; if one calls the other roundhead he is cashiered : insomuch that the countries where they come leap for joy of them, and come in and join with them. How happy were it if all the forces were thus disciplined !"

These were the men who ultimately decided the war, and established the Commonwealth. On the field of Marston, Rupert gave Cromwell the name of "Ironsides," and from thence this famous name passed to his troopers. There are two features in their history which we need to note. They were indeed "such men as had some conscience in their work" ; but they were also much more. They were disciplined and trained soldiers. They were

the only body of "regulars" on either side. The instinctive genius of Cromwell from the very first created the strong nucleus of a regular army, which at last in discipline, in skill, in valour, reached the highest perfection ever attained by soldiers either in ancient or modern times. The fervour of Cromwell is continually pressing towards the extension of this "regular" force. Through all the early disasters, this body of "Ironsides" kept the cause alive: at Marston it overwhelmed the king: so soon as, by the New Model, this system was extended to the whole army, the Civil War was at an end.

The scanty notices of Cromwell which in these first two years of war have come down to us give us a wonderful picture of energy, zeal, and resource. He provides for everything, goes everywhere, and wherever he comes the cause prospers, the enemy recoil. His passion stirs whole counties; his swift strokes frustrate the royalist plans, at every crisis his presence of mind improvises the one thing needful. Before the royal standard was raised, he had established patrols round Huntingdon, who watched all communication between the capital and the king at York. His first task was the organisation of a strong confederacy to block any Royalist union north with south. On the day before the battle of Edgehill the House had approved the formation of county unions for organisation and defence. Cambridge, grouping round her Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex, and Hertfordshire, formed the Eastern Association. Soon Huntingdon, and ultimately Lincoln, were added. This famous Eastern Association, strategically, was the *Torres Vedras* lines of the early Civil War—morally it became the backbone of the Parliamentary cause. "Here," says Sir Philip Warwick,

"was the root of the Independency." Its founder and its soul was Cromwell. The growth of it contributed to fill up the ranks of his troops, as the formation of his regiment consolidated the Union itself. He is first named "Colonel" on 2d March 1643. We catch gleams of him from time to time searching the houses of the disaffected, dispersing Royalist combinations, seizing plate, and unearthing conspiracies. It is in these days that he writes his famous warning to Mr. Barnard of Huntingdon: "I know you have been wary in your carriages: be not too confident thereof. Subtlety may deceive you; integrity never will." It is in these days, doubtless, that the scene took place between Oliver and his uncle, Sir Oliver, at Ramsey. "He visited him," Sir Oliver told Sir P. Warwick, "with a good strong party of horse, and asked him for his blessing, and the few hours he was there, he would not keep on his hat in his presence; but at the same time he not only disarmed but plundered him: for he took away all his plate."

In the meantime the king's cause is prospering in the north and the west. Essex lay inert, like a man who both feared defeat and did not wish for victory. Newcastle secured the north to the king, and shut up the Fairfaxes in Hull. Rupert on the west, Camden and other chiefs in the North Midlands, were raiding, plundering, and exacting contributions. It was plainly essential to gain the line of the Trent, secure Lincoln, and take Newark, the key of the Midlands. All combination to take Newark failed, in spite of Cromwell's appeals and remonstrances; but he himself advanced into Lincolnshire, occupying Peterborough, and taking Crowland. On the 13th of May he fought and won the

first fight where he was in chief command. Some two miles from Grantham he met a body of Newark cavaliers who had hitherto swept the country round at their pleasure.

“God hath given us this evening,” he writes, “a glorious victory over our enemies. They were, as we are informed, one and twenty columns of horse-troops, and three or four of dragoons. It was late in the evening when we drew out ; they came and faced us within two miles of the town. So soon as we had the alarm we drew out our forces, consisting of about twelve troops,—whereof some of them so poor and broken, that you shall seldom see worse : with this handful it pleased God to cast the scale ; . . . and our men charging fiercely upon them, by God’s providence they were immediately routed, and ran all away, and we had the execution of them two or three miles.”

For the first time a body of Puritan troopers, meeting in fair onset double their number of cavaliers flushed with a victorious career, “immediately routed” them and cut them to pieces. Cromwell’s men had been in arms barely nine months ; but they were already formed cavalry. Their commander could not but feel that with such men ultimate victory was certain.

Elsewhere the cause of the Parliament waned. Hampden died in June, murmuring, “Save my bleeding country ;” Waller had been annihilated in the west ; Bristol was taken by Rupert ; and everywhere surrender to the king seemed imminent. In these straits a new effort was made to recover Lincolnshire. Cromwell took Burghley House by desperate fighting, and clearing Stamford pushed on to relieve Gainsborough. On the 28th of July, after a forced march of fifty-five miles, he met a great body of the enemy’s horse, under Cavendish,

Newcastle's kinsman, posted on a hill, two miles from Gainsborough.

"We came up," he says, "horse to horse ; where we disputed it with our swords and pistols a pretty time : all keeping close order, so that one could not break through the other. At last, they a little shrinking, our men perceiving it pressed in upon them, and immediately routed this whole body ; some flying on the one side and others on the other of the enemy's reserve ; and our men, pursuing them, had chase and execution about five or six miles."

But Cromwell was no ungovernable Rupert. Looking round he saw one regiment of the enemy's reserve still unbroken, and preparing to fall on his own rear. Rallying his men, he charged the Royalist general unawares, forced him down the hill into a quagmire, and cut his regiment to pieces, and killed young Cavendish. "My captain-lieutenant," wrote Cromwell, "slew him with a thrust under his short ribs. The rest of the body was wholly routed, not one man staying upon the place."

Gainsborough was relieved and supplied ; but the day was not over. A fresh enemy was descried on the other side of the town. They too were thrust back ; till presently the scanty forces of the Parliament found themselves face to face with the main army of Newcastle. The peril was extreme ; the footmen from Gainsborough were driven in ; but Cromwell divided his troops into two parties, caused them to retreat in turns, facing the enemy's fresh horse ; and at length, by nine removes, he drew off his whole command, all exhausted as it was, from before Newcastle's army, with the loss of only two men. For the second time Cromwell's troopers had utterly routed the cavalier squadrons in a fair charge. But this last combat proved much more. It had shown, in one

of the most difficult operations in war (a small body of horse holding an army in check, whilst its own infantry retreats), unfaltering discipline in the men and masterly tactics in their handling. This affair is the first glimpse we obtain of really scientific war. The Ironsides were now led by a consummate general of horse. "This," wrote Whitelocke, "was the beginning of his great fortunes, and he now began to appear in the world."

Before Newcastle's northern army Cromwell could do nothing but retreat. On the third day he was at Huntingdon, eighty miles away. His appeals to the committee become desperate.

"If I could speak words to pierce your hearts," he writes, "with the sense of our and your condition, I would! . . . If somewhat be not done in this, you will see Newcastle's army march up into your bowels" (31st July). "It's no longer disputing, but out instantly all you can! Raise all your bands; send them to Huntingdon;—get up what volunteers you can; hasten your horses. Send these letters to Norfolk, Suffolk, and Essex, without delay. I beseech you spare not, but be expeditious and industrious! Almost all our foot have quitted Stamford: there is nothing to interrupt an enemy, but our horse, that is considerable. You must act lively; do it without distraction. Neglect no means" (6th August). "I beseech you hasten your levies, what you can; especially those of foot! Quicken all our friends with new letters upon this occasion. . . . Gentlemen, make them able to live and subsist that are willing to spend their blood for you" (8th August).

If Cromwell's thin line of troopers had been broken by Newcastle in that month of August, London would have been open, and the issue of the war might have changed.

The day after the last of these letters, 9th August, the House resolved to raise the infantry of the Associa-

tion to 10,000, and to appoint the Earl of Manchester as Major-General. Cromwell was one of his four colonels of horse, and soon became second in command. All this time, as during the months preceding, he is beating up recruits, imploring money, and organising his troops.

"Lay not too much upon the back of a poor gentleman, who desires, without much noise, to lay down his life and bleed the last drop to serve the cause and you" (28th May). "I advise you that your 'foot company' may be turned into a troop of horse; which indeed will, by God's blessing, far more advantage the cause than two or three companies of foot: especially if your men be honest godly men, which by all means I desire" (2d August). "Hasten your horses;—a few hours may undo you, neglected. I beseech you be careful what captains of horse you choose, what men be mounted: a few honest men are better than numbers. Some time they must have for exercise. If you choose godly honest men to be captains of horse, honest men will follow them; and they will be careful to mount such. . . . I had rather have a plain russet-coated captain that knows what he fights for, and loves what he knows, than that which you call 'a gentleman' and is nothing else. I honour a *gentleman* that is so indeed!"

To Oliver St. John he writes (11th September):—

"My troops increase. I have a lovely company; you would respect them, did you know them. They are no 'Anabaptists'; they are honest sober Christians:—They expect to be used as Men! . . . I desire not to seek myself:—'but' I have little money of my own to help my Soldiers. My estate is little. I tell you, the business of Ireland and England hath had of me, in money, between Eleven and Twelve Hundred pounds;—therefore my Private can do little to help the Public. You have had my money: I hope in God I desire to venture my skin. So do mine. Lay weight upon their patience; but break it not!"

Cromwell's spirit, rousing Association and Parliament

together with the inherent rottenness in the king's forces, averted the immediate danger. In September the House took the Solemn League and Covenant, the Presbyterian charter, as the condition of obtaining an army from Scotland. The Fairfaxes held out gallantly at Hull, and a combined movement of three forces, under Manchester, Willoughby, and Cromwell, pushed steadily into Lincolnshire. On 22d September Cromwell relieved and entered Hull, where began his brotherhood-in-arms with Fairfax. He brought Sir Thomas and his horse into Lincoln. On 11th October the combined horse met near Winceby a strong force of cavalry from Newark. The numbers were nearly equal, some three thousand troopers on either side. Cromwell's men were worn out with their marches, and he would have declined a combat could it have been done. At the sight of the enemy the spirit of his troopers rose, and they charged, singing psalms, Cromwell leading the van, assisted by Manchester and seconded by Fairfax. He "fell with brave resolution upon the enemy"; his horse was killed under him at the first charge and fell down upon him; as he rose up, he was knocked down again by the gentleman who charged him. He seized a trooper's horse and mounted himself again, and prepared to head a second charge. "The enemy stood not another; but were driven back upon their own body, which was to have seconded them; and at last put these into a plain disorder; and thus in less than half an hour's fight they were all quite routed." The enemy were chased, slaughtered, drowned, and dispersed; a scanty remnant reached Newark. Thus a third time Cromwell's horse had in fair fight scattered the cavalier cavalry like chaff. On the

following day Newcastle abandoned the siege of Hull ; on the 20th of the same month Manchester took Lincoln. From that date Lincolnshire passed to the cause of the Parliament, and the result of the campaign was to win for it the whole east of England, as far north as the Humber.

The year 1644 opened with better prospects for the Parliament. In January a Scotch army of 20,000 men came to their assistance ; Cromwell, reappearing in the House, charged Lord Willoughby with misconduct, and induced it to name Manchester to the sole command in the seven associated counties ; and in February it appointed the Committee of Both Kingdoms the supreme executive authority for the conduct of the war. Cromwell, Manchester, St. John, and the Vanes were named members of it. Manchester made Cromwell his lieutenant-general. A contemporary tells us that " Manchester himself, a quiet, meek man, permitted his lieutenant-general, Cromwell, to guide all the army at his pleasure. The man is a very wise and active head, universally well beloved, as religious as stout. Being a known Independent, the most of the soldiers, who loved new ways, put themselves under his command." The situation therefore was this. The whole of Eastern England, from the Humber to the Thames, was firmly organised under one command, which was practically that of Cromwell. This army was composed almost wholly of zealous Puritans. And Cromwell, its real chief, was the ruling member of the Committee of the Association, and at the same time a member of the Committee of Both Kingdoms.

No sooner was the Covenant taken by Parliament

than it was resolved to force its acceptance on the Associated Counties at least. Cromwell was Governor of Ely, and Manchester was ordered to impose the Covenant on Cambridge. This was carried out in its stern severity by both; and the ritual of the Church was forcibly suppressed, and the ancient art symbolism ruthlessly destroyed. It was then that took place the destruction of statues, carvings and glass, the harrying of divines, and the scene in Ely Cathedral, with Mr. Hitch. Cromwell had by letter peremptorily ordered this clergyman "to forbear altogether his choir-service, so unedifying and offensive." Mr. Hitch persisting in it, Cromwell with his guard marched into the church, with his hat on, we are told (he was on actual military duty); he called out, "I am a man under authority, and am commanded to dismiss this assembly." Mr. Hitch still persevered with his service; whereupon Cromwell broke out, "Leave off your fooling and come down, sir!": which he did. The ring of the "sharp untuneable voice" is not pleasant here; nor is driving a priest from his pulpit an honourable mission. Cromwell had in him a strong vein of coarseness; he was a soldier in a civil war executing peremptory orders, and neither he nor any Puritan of that age would ever allow that terms could be kept with Popish or semi-Popish divines.

Though Cromwell could not rise superior to his age where Romish ritual was concerned, he was far above his Presbyterian comrades in true toleration. The exigencies of war and government broadened his view of religion, till he ultimately rose to be the most tolerant statesman of his time. Even now, amidst these vile tasks of wrecking cathedrals and ejecting priests, we can

see his native spirit asserting its freedom. Major-General Crawford, a zealous Scotch Presbyterian, Cromwell's rival and secret enemy, had suspended and arrested a certain colonel. Cromwell writes sharply to Crawford:—

“Surely you are not well advised thus to turn off one so faithful to the cause, and so able to serve you as this man is. Give me leave to tell you I cannot be of your judgment; if a man notorious for wickedness, for oaths, for drinking, hath as great a share in your affection as one who fears an oath, who fears to sin. . . . Ay, but the man ‘is an Anabaptist.’ Are you sure of that? Admit he be, shall that render him incapable to serve the public? ‘He is indiscreet.’ It may be so, in some things; we have all human infirmities. . . . *Sir, the State, in choosing men to serve it, takes no notice of their opinions; if they be willing faithfully to serve it,—that satisfies.* I advised you formerly to bear with men of different minds from yourself: if you had done it when I advised you to it, I think you would not have had so many stumbling-blocks in your way. . . . Take heed of being sharp, or too easily sharpened by others against those to whom you can object little but that they square not with you in every opinion concerning matters of religion.”

This is the first open avowal of Cromwell's attitude. He was opposed root and branch to Presbyterianism as a narrow and oppressive formalism; and he long delayed to sign the Covenant. He was an Independent, and the chief of the Independents. About doctrines and forms of worship he cared little. Bible religion, as understood by Puritans, was the one thing needful; subject to that, freedom of conscience to all forms of worship. Papists were enemies of the common weal: the ministers of a State Church should not practise Popish rites. Vice, profanity, slackness were not to be borne in the ranks. But every zealous, moral, God-fear-

ing servant of the State should be free to follow his own conscience.

All through the spring we find Cromwell active on various services in the counties of Bucks, Warwick, Oxford, Cambridge, and Lincoln. He took Hillesden House, Banbury, and secured Sleaford. The whole country east of the Trent and the upper Thames was now nearly recovered to the Parliament. In the west all was confusion and failure. But the long-planned deliverance of the north was at length at hand. In April the Scots joined Manchester and the Fairfaxes before York; and by the end of June the combined forces numbered about 24,000 men, under Leven, Fairfax, and Manchester. At Marston Moor, eight miles from York, on the 2d July, they met a combined army of nearly equal strength under Rupert, Newcastle, and Goring.

The day was dull and thunderous, with occasional showers; and it was far into the afternoon before the two armies were in position. Hour after hour they stood on the moor glaring at each other across the ditch which parted them; each watching for his opportunity to attack. The Parliament's men occupied a slight hill, and stood to arms in the long corn, from time to time chanting a psalm. Rupert had advanced his men to the front for immediate attack; but the older generals of the king induced him to defer the combat. A desultory cannonade began on both sides, and here Cromwell's nephew, young Valentine Walton, lost his life. The armies were thus drawn up—Cromwell commanded the left wing, where he had, besides the infantry of the Eastern Association, some 4200 horsemen, directly front-

ing Rupert and his cavaliers. Nine thousand Scotch infantry held the centre, opposed to Newcastle and the main body of the Royalists. The two Fairfaxes led the right wing, facing Goring and his cavalry. It was seven o'clock in the summer afternoon—the royal generals had retired for repose—when the army of the Parliament suddenly fell on Rupert. Horse and foot of the Eastern Association were at once across the ditch in one headlong charge. Cromwell in person dashed into Rupert's chosen regiment. He was slightly wounded in the neck by a shot. "A miss is as good as a mile," he cried; and the flower of the cavalry in both armies were locked in a deadly grapple, "hacking one another at the sword point." For a moment the Ironsides reeled, but their reserve of three Scotch regiments pressing on behind, Cromwell speedily broke the whole Royalist chivalry, "and scattered them before him like a little dust." But as his foremost lines were chasing and slaughtering the flying cavaliers to the very gates of York, the general held in hand his main force, and paused, as he had done at Gainsborough, to see how the battle sped on his right.

It was indeed speeding ill, and was all but an utter rout. Fairfax's men on the right wing had been cut to pieces, and chased into Tadcaster by Goring's horsemen; and, dashing in wild flight into their own infantry in their rear, they had utterly broken the whole wing. Goring turned on to the flank of the Scots in the centre, whilst Newcastle's border regiment, known as the Whitecoats, assailed them in front. The Scots, fighting bravely, were all but overwhelmed. Whole regiments broke and fled, and but three remained on the field

The Earl of Leven, their commander, believing all lost, fled towards Leeds ; Lord Fairfax and the Earl of Manchester were swept away for a time in the *mêlée*.

As Cromwell rallied his men from the tremendous charge which had broken Rupert like dust, a disastrous sight met his eyes. Sir Thomas Fairfax, wounded in the face, with his charger wounded, had forced his way through to the Royalist rear ; but he was separated from his men, and had lost all touch with his command. From him Cromwell learned that the right wing was dispersed, and the centre in desperate straits. In this strange battle, whilst the prince, the Royalist commander-in-chief, was flying with his men miles away to the north, the three generals of the Parliament were flying with the fragments of their troops far away to the south. In an hour the genius of Cromwell had changed disaster into victory. Launching the Scotch troopers of his own wing against Newcastle's Whitecoats, and the infantry of the Eastern Association to succour the remnants of the Scots in the centre, he swooped with the bulk of his own cavalry round the rear of the king's army, and fell upon Goring's victorious troopers on the opposite side of the field. Taking them in the rear, all disordered as they were in the chase and the plunder, he utterly crushed and dispersed them. Having thus with his own squadron annihilated the cavalry of both the enemy's wings, he closed round upon the Royalist centre ; and there the Whitecoats and the remnants of the king's infantry were cut to pieces almost to a man.

Such startling results, so suddenly achieved, are not very hard to explain. The armies which fought at Marston consisted, with one exception, of brave but

untrained militia. On both sides the command was divided and the cohesion loose, and that in the army of the Parliament even more than in that of the king. None of the generals, except Rupert and Cromwell, had any real capacity, and Rupert was madly overweening and reckless. But the 4000 horsemen whom Cromwell led were a perfectly trained and regular corps of cavalry; as the veteran Lesley said, "Europe hath no better soldiers." Their leader was an almost ideal general of cavalry—furious in the charge, rapid in insight, wary, alert, and master of himself. There was nothing to surprise us, therefore, that a splendid corps of regular cavalry, led by a consummate tactician, should thus in an hour ride down an ill-led, ill-ordered army of militiamen.

It was a crushing and bloody overthrow. The chase and slaughter continued till ten at night. Four thousand Royalists, the flower of the king's men, lay on the field, and the white skins of the slain revealed how many of his silken courtiers had fallen. Colours, arms, supplies, baggage, and papers fell to the victors. The king's army was destroyed, and Rupert's prestige was gone. The prince and his chosen cavaliers had indeed been swept from the field "like chaff." The fugitives from the Parliament's army drew back to the ranks; and Leven and his generals learned the next day that they had won a mighty success.

In a noble letter to his sister's husband Cromwell recounted the victory, and then suddenly broke to him the news of his son's death. He writes thus on the 5th of July to Colonel Valentine Walton:—

"It's our duty to sympathise in all mercies; and to

praise the Lord together in chastisements or trials, that so we may sorrow together.

"Truly England and the Church of God hath had a great favour from the Lord, in this great Victory given unto us, such as the like never was since this War began. It had all the evidences of an absolute Victory obtained by the Lord's blessing upon the Godly Party principally. We never charged but we routed the enemy. The Left Wing, which I commanded, being our own horse, saving a few Scots in our rear, beat all the Prince's horse. God made them as stubble to our swords. We charged their regiments of foot with our horse, and routed all we charged. The particulars I cannot relate now ; but I believe, of Twenty Thousand the Prince hath not Four Thousand left. Give glory, all the glory, to God.

"Sir, God hath taken away your eldest Son by a cannon-shot. It break his leg. We were necessitated to have it cut off, whereof he died.

"Sir, you know my own trials this way : but the Lord supported me with this, That the Lord took him into the happiness we all pant for and live for. There is your precious child full of glory, never to know sin or sorrow any more. He was a gallant young man, exceedingly gracious. God give you His comfort. . . . Truly he was exceedingly beloved in the Army, of all that knew him. But few knew him ; for he was a precious young man, fit for God. You have cause to bless the Lord. He is a glorious Saint in Heaven ; wherein you ought exceedingly to rejoice. Let this drink up your sorrow ; seeing these are not feigned words to comfort you, but the thing is so real and undoubted a truth. You may do all things by the strength of Christ. Seek that, and you shall easily bear your trial. Let this public mercy to the Church of God make you to forget your private sorrow. The Lord be your strength."

The immediate effect of the victory of Marston was to give the north of England to the Parliament. Rupert, rallying a force of cavaliers, broke round by the north-west into Lancashire ; the other royal generals dispersed,

and York, Newcastle, and other strongholds in the north fell one after another to the Parliament. Within a few months the whole north of England was practically theirs. And a line drawn from the Mersey to the Thames at London, and thence to Southampton water, would thenceforth roughly enclose the England which acknowledged the Houses. •

CHAPTER V

THE NEW MODEL—NASEBY—END OF THE FIRST CIVIL WAR

A.D. 1645-1646. *ÆTAT.* 46-47

THE great success at Marston, which had given the north to the Parliament, was all undone in the south and west through feebleness and jealousies in the leaders and the wretched policy that directed the war. Detached armies, consisting of a local militia, were aimlessly ordered about by a committee of civilians in London. Disaster followed on disaster. Essex, Waller, and Manchester would neither agree amongst themselves nor obey orders. Essex and Waller had parted before Marston was fought; Manchester had returned from York to protect his own eastern counties. Waller, after his defeat at Cropredy, did nothing, and naturally found his army melting away. Essex, perversely advancing into the west, was out-mancœuvred by Charles, and ended a campaign of blunders by the surrender of all his infantry.

By September 1644 throughout the whole south-west the Parliament had not an army in the field. But the committee of the Houses still toiled on with honourable spirit, and at last brought together near Newbury a

united army nearly double the strength of the king's. On Sunday, the 29th of October, was fought the second battle of Newbury, as usual in these ill-ordered campaigns, late in the afternoon. An arduous day ended without victory, in spite of the greater numbers of the Parliament's army, though the men fought well, and their officers led them with skill and energy. At night the king was suffered to withdraw his army without loss, and later to carry off his guns and train. The urgent appeals of Cromwell and his officers could not infuse into Manchester energy to win the day, or spirit to pursue the retreating foe.

Such want of skill and of heart roused Cromwell to indignation. And the differences between himself and Manchester, which had long been smouldering, blazed into a flame. Cromwell was the recognised chief of the Independents, Manchester was now a leader of the Presbyterians; Cromwell was resolved to beat the king, Manchester was now eager for peace; Cromwell was the leader of the farmers and yeomen who were bent on a thorough reform, Manchester represented the great peers who already feared that rebellion had gone too far. Cromwell, in filling his regiments with zealous soldiers, refused to take account of their religions and dogmas or their social position. To him a God-fearing man, stout in the charge and orderly in his conduct, was worthy of any post, were he the son of peer or peasant. He told Manchester that such soldiers as he sought would prevent the making a dishonourable peace. The rise of independency now began to alarm the rich and well-born Puritans, just as the rise of Presbyterianism had driven over to the king so many rich and well-

born Churchmen. Cromwell had told Manchester that he hoped "to live to see never a nobleman in England," and that it would not be well till he was but plain Mr. Montague. Cromwell had never at any time any definite leaning towards social revolution. But the set of circumstances was forcing him to see how Crown and Peerage held together, how spiritual freedom was bound up with social change. He was even reported to have said that "if he met the king in battle, he would fire his pistol at him as at another." The time was come when those who had resolved to carry the work through were to take the place of those who had but half a heart. At a council of war, called on 10th November, Manchester said, "If we beat the king ninety and nine times, yet he is king still, and so will his posterity be after him; but if the king beat us once we shall be all hanged, and our posterity made slaves."—"My lord," replied Cromwell, "if this be so, why did we take up arms at first? This is against fighting ever hereafter. If so, let us make peace, be it never so base." Cromwell resolved to strike a great blow.

During this autumn Cromwell more than once returned to his place in Parliament; and for some months in the winter of 1644-45 we find his principal activity there. In September he had in vain attempted the removal of General Crawford, the Scotch representative of Presbyterianism in the eastern army. The campaign of Newbury decided him to attack Manchester.

On the 25th of November he exhibited in the House a formal charge against the Earl of Manchester, to the effect "That the said Earl hath always been indisposed

and backward to engagements, and the ending of the war by the sword; and for such a peace as a victory would be a disadvantage to:" and the charge went on to specify in detail that since the taking of York, and especially before Newbury, he had declined to take further advantage of the enemy, and on many fit opportunities to bring him to battle.

Cromwell's speech made a deep impression on the House, and a committee was appointed to consider his charge, Mr. Zouch Tate as chairman. The Earl of Manchester defended himself, and in turn charged Cromwell with insubordination. A long and ineffective dispute was carried on in both Houses. The Scotch representatives consulted some leading members if General Cromwell, the avowed enemy of Crawford, could not be proceeded against as "an incendiary." Whitelocke and Maynard told them that, without better proof, he was far too strong in both Houses to attempt it. At length Cromwell resolved on his great stroke for reorganising the army.

On the 9th of December the House was in committee to consider the sad condition of the kingdom. "There was general silence for a good space of time." At length Cromwell rose and spoke to this effect:—

"It is now a time to speak, or for ever hold the tongue. The important occasion now, is no less than To save a Nation, out of a bleeding, nay, almost dying condition: which the long continuance of this War hath already brought it into; so that without a more speedy, vigorous, and effectual prosecution of the War,—casting off all lingering proceedings like soldiers of fortune beyond sea, to spin out a war,—we shall make the kingdom weary of us, and hate the name of a Parliament.

“For what do the enemy say? nay, what do many say who were friends at the beginning of the Parliament? Even this, That the Members of both Houses have got great places and commands, and the sword into their hands; and, what by interest in Parliament, what by power in the Army, will perpetually continue themselves in grandeur, and not permit the War speedily to end, lest their own power should determine with it. . . .

“But this I would recommend to your prudence, Not to insist upon any complaint or oversight of any Commander-in-chief upon any occasion whatsoever; for as I must acknowledge myself guilty of oversights, so I know they can rarely be avoided in military affairs. Therefore, waving a strict inquiry into the causes of these things, let us apply ourselves to the remedy; which is most necessary. And I hope we have such true English hearts, and zealous affections towards the general weal of our Mother Country, as no Members of either Houses will scruple to deny themselves, and their own private interests, for the public good; nor account it to be a dishonour done to them, whatever the Parliament shall resolve upon in this weighty matter.”

Such was the first speech of Cromwell's which has come down to us, where he appears as a statesman impressing his policy on Parliament and the nation. Both in form and in substance it is in the highest sense characteristic. There is the strong personality, the rough mother-wit, the vivid and racy phrase, as of a man in authority taking counsel with his familiars, not as of the orator addressing a senate. There is the directness of purpose with laborious care to avoid premature precision in detail, any needless opposition, and all personal offence. The form is conciliatory, guarded and qualified, almost allusive; even the specific measure recommended is left to be inferred or subsequently defined. Yet the general purpose how clear: the will behind the words how strenuous!

Thereupon Mr. Zouch Tate, in evident concert with Cromwell, proposed, "under the similitude of a boil in the thumb," what was afterwards known as the Self-denying Ordinance. By it all members of either House were required to resign their commands. Cromwell in a speech denied that this would destroy the army, which looks, he said, to the cause they fight for. Within ten days it was passed. And at a stroke the Essexes, Manchesters, the political and Presbyterian officers were removed from command.

Within two months more the New Model was passed for the army. It completely reorganised the forces of the Commonwealth. By it three irregular, disconnected armies of 10,000 each, consisting of militia and loose levies, raised for a short time, and under various authorities, were consolidated into one regular army of 22,000 horse and foot; so as to form a standing army, permanently organised under a single uniform command. Sir Thomas Fairfax was made commander-in-chief; and he busily laboured to complete its formation. The voice was the voice of Fairfax; but the hands were the hands of Oliver.

The New Model and the Self-denying Ordinance must be taken together; and together they amount to a complete revolution in the military and civil executive. By the New Model the forces of the Parliament, hitherto the separate corps of local militia, were organised into a regular army of professional soldiers. They gained at once the cohesion, the mobility, and the discipline of a standing army. But there was much more than this in the change. The cavalry of the Eastern Association had long been a regular army in everything

but name; and they formed the model for the rest. They were themselves much more than an army. They were an organised body of radical reformers, bent upon very definite objects in the spiritual and also in the civil order. And though their military discipline was rigid, they had long been permitted to carry on agitation in things religious and even political, under the specious disguise of seeking the Lord in prayer and exhortation.

Cromwell had created this singular body of Bible warriors, in the first instance, as men "who had some conscience" in the task of defeating the king, but soon deliberately, and even avowedly, as men who would stand between the Parliament and dishonourable peace. In things spiritual, they were Independent or earnest for entire liberty of conscience; in things civil, they were already tending to the Commonwealth, to political and social revolution. To organise the New Model on the frame of the Ironsides was to put the sword of the State into the hands of Independency and of radical reform.

The Independents would not have been made masters of the situation but for the Self-denying Ordinance. At a stroke it put the army into the hands of its own military chiefs; and by excluding from command members of either House, it destroyed the hold which Parliament retained over the generals. Essex and Manchester, to whom rank and wealth had given a factitious influence in a militia army, were now excluded, as was also the whole order of the peerage. Essex and Manchester represented Presbyterianism, the party of peace, and the landed gentry. To exclude them and all members of Parliament was practically to exclude these elements from command. And thus, in exchanging a force of local

volunteers—the natural chiefs of which were the members of either House—for an organised army of regulars, led by professional officers, the Parliament was deliberately giving itself a master. This would have been the case had it simply created an ordinary army; but the New Model was much more than an army. It was itself a Parliament—a Parliament larger, more resolute, and far more closely knit together in spirit and will than the Parliament which continued to sit officially at Westminster. From this hour the motive power of the Revolution passed from the House of Commons to the army.

There is no reason to doubt that New Model and Self-denying Ordinance, in conception and execution, were both the work of Cromwell. The New Model was simply his own troop enlarged, as he explained it to Hampden, to Manchester, to Essex, to Crawford, in so many speeches and so many letters. The Self-denying Ordinance was in keeping with his whole conduct in war—that of thrusting aside all but thorough-going soldiers, whose single idea was to win. As he had successively assailed Lord Willoughby, Lord Grey of Groby, Essex, Crawford, so now he got rid of Manchester, and all possible Manchesters to come. The method of carrying out the great change is equally characteristic of the man—the employment of others in the work; the energy in pushing it through with the tentative, conciliatory, and cautious way in which the details are worked out. All bears the stamp of the thorough tactician and master of men. Even now, as always later, he is not so much a Parliamentary leader as a chief having authority, who, in a formal message, is urging on the House a general policy to follow.

Did he see all the momentous bearing of the change? Did he press it in desire of personal power? Two questions the answer to which is obvious enough. Cromwell was a man whose mind was always bent on the immediate work to his hand. The urgent need of the time was an organised army of professional soldiers. Without that the king was in fair way to return in triumph. The New Model did, in fact, prove to be the saving of the cause. But Cromwell, with his keen insight, could not have been long in grasping the truth that the New Model meant not only the saving of the Parliament, but the saving of the Parliament in a certain way—utter defeat for the king, and entire liberty for conscience. Did he desire personal power? He desired the success of his cause. And he took power when it came within his grasp, in order to secure his desires. Such are the conditions of healthy statesmanship: such is the duty of a born statesman. In dealing with persons his conduct was open, moderate, and not ungenerous, even whilst most trenchant. He thrust them aside, because, whilst they remained, the work, as he cared for it, could not go on. He stepped into their place, because he knew himself fit to accomplish the work.

The New Model army was voted in January, and finally established on 19th of February 1645. Sir Thomas Fairfax was named Commander-in-Chief, with Skippon for Major-General. The second place was left open, obviously for Cromwell. There can be little doubt that the promoters of the new measure fully designed to name him. Fairfax was occupied from January to April organising the army at Windsor. It was to consist of

22,000 men — 14,400 foot, 6600 horse, and 1000 dragoons. There is no evidence that Cromwell directly took part in the work. But there can be little doubt that it was done after his own heart. During these months we find him in Parliament, voting for the execution of the two traitor Hothams, and afterwards for that of Laud.

In April Cromwell was sent into the west to oppose Goring and Grenville, and on the 22d of that month he came to Windsor to lay down his command and to take leave of the general. But on the following morning he received the commands of the committee to continue his command in spite of the New Ordinance. No direct evidence has yet been produced as to how far Cromwell had arranged his plans for being continued in command, or how far this purpose was generally understood and accepted. It would have been contrary to his nature of restless vigilance and of personal self-reliance, either to commit to chance so momentous an office, or willingly to stand aside out of romantic delicacy. We may doubt the discernment of the worthy Sprigge, when he tells us of the lieutenant-general, "that he thought of nothing less in all the world." Cromwell must have known the counsels of the committee. And doubtless he felt himself so necessary to the cause, and his ascendancy to be so complete, that he might safely leave others to determine the manner and season of his own personal exemption.

The New Model army was now ready; but though Cromwell was continued in command he was not attached to it. For some weeks Cromwell and Fairfax were directed to the west and the Midlands, under orders from London, apparently without aim or general design

We hear of Oliver in Oxfordshire, in Wiltshire, at Ely, and at Huntingdon, in rapid movements of no decisive kind. Fairfax was ordered to meet the king, who, at the end of May, had stormed and sacked Leicester, and was again advancing southwards. Fairfax and his army found the king on the borders of Leicestershire. On the eve of battle, Fairfax sent a letter to the Houses, begging that Cromwell might be sent to command the horse—a service to which he was marked out, wrote the general, by “the general esteem and affection which he hath both with the officers and soldiers of this whole army, his own personal worth and ability for the employment, his great care, diligence, courage, and faithfulness in the services you have already employed him, with the constant presence and blessing of God that have accompanied him.” The order demanded was at once sent, and instantly obeyed by Cromwell. In the words of Clarendon: “The evil genius of the kingdom in a moment shifted the whole scene.”

The two armies were now in touch; and at six in the morning, 13th June, at Guilsborough, Fairfax held a council of war. “In the midst of the debate,” says Sprigge, “came in Lieutenant-General Cromwell, out of the Association, with six hundred horse and dragoons, who was with the greatest joy received by the general and the whole army. Instantly orders were given for drums to beat, trumpets to sound to horse, and all our army to draw to a rendezvous.” The arrival of Oliver changed the whole scene. For some days, through both armies, the rumour had run “that ‘Ironsides’ was coming to join the Parliament’s army”; and as he rode in with his eastern troopers the cavalry raised a great shout of joy. Harri-

son was sent out with one party to scout ; Ireton, with another strong force, to watch the enemy's flank. On both sides they made ready for a decisive battle.

On 14th June, at three in the morning, Fairfax advanced towards Naseby ; and at five the king's army was seen cresting the northern hills. Fairfax, with skilful manœuvres, drew up his army thus. As usual, he placed his foot in the centre. The entire cavalry, near 6000 strong, he committed to Cromwell, who placed them on the two wings. Ireton on the left, with five regiments and dragoons ; whilst he himself, with six regiments, took the right wing. As at Marston, the armies were nearly equal, about 10,000 each ; the positions not unequal ; the general disposition of the armies almost the same. But the tactics and the qualities of the troops are evidently much improved. It is said that the king had 1500 officers who had seen regular war ; and Cromwell directed the counsels of Fairfax. As at Marston, Rupert commanded the right wing for the king ; but he was no longer opposed to Cromwell, who now led the right wing of the Parliament. The combat in its general features curiously resembled that of Marston, the difference being that at Naseby it is a well-ordered battle between regular troops, and no longer a confused *mêlée* of militiamen. As at Marston, the centre and one wing of the Parliament were in sore straits, when the wing which Cromwell led, having annihilated the enemy opposed to it, sweeping round, overwhelmed the victorious centre and wing of the royal army, and again snatched victory out of defeat.

As the cavalry of the king were seen to advance with gallantry and resolution, Cromwell, not waiting

the attack, charged with his whole wing. The word that day was "*God our strength.*" As regiment after regiment charged, they routed and drove back in confusion the king's left wing: "Not one body of the enemy's horse which they charged but they routed." In the meantime the foot in Fairfax's centre were "overpressed," gave ground, and went off in some disorder, falling back on their reserves; when they rallied, and again pressed back on the king.

The left wing of the Parliament, where Ireton was in command, had fared worse. The furious charge of Rupert had broken them in pieces. Ireton, wounded in the thigh and face, was for the time taken prisoner. Rupert pursued the broken wing almost to Naseby, and was making an attempt on the train in the rear, when at last he perceived the disaster that had befallen his left wing on the other side of the field. Cromwell, having driven the enemy's horse in front of him quite behind the infantry, turned round, as at Marston, on the king's centre, which, taken in flank and in front, was speedily dispersed. One *tertia* alone (like Newcastle's border Whitecoats at Marston) held out for the king, "standing with incredible courage and resolution, assailed in flanks, front, and rear," till Cromwell brought up Fairfax's own regiment of foot, who, falling on the remnant with butt-end of muskets as the cavalry plunged into flank and rear, finally broke and destroyed them.

The king still had a strong force of horse, mainly consisting of Rupert's men returning from the chase; and for a moment it seemed that the day had yet to be decided by a fresh combat between the victorious horse on either side. But Cromwell's unshaken wariness, even

in the heat of victory, refused to trust so momentous an issue to chance. With signal energy he and Fairfax again brought up the infantry and cannon, and rapidly re-formed the army in a new line, with horse, foot, and guns in regular order of battle. Charles, who now had none but his rallied horsemen to lead, rode round, calling out, "One charge more, gentlemen, and the day is ours." It was too late. His troopers, no longer with infantry or guns, found before them again a solid army advancing in complete order. At the sight "they broke without standing one stroke more." For fourteen miles, up to two miles of Leicester, they were chased; severe execution was done, and crowds of prisoners taken.

It was a crushing defeat. Five thousand prisoners, five hundred of them officers, cannon, train, powder, standards, baggage, and the king's cabinet with his papers, fell to the victors. Politically, the seizure of the papers disclosing the royal intrigues was the most important result of the battle. In a military sense, the king was annihilated. No one numbered the slain. But the king's army had ceased to exist. Rallying a few horsemen he escaped to Leicester, and retreated into the west, never again appearing at the head of an army in the field.

The generals of the Parliament had all fought bravely and commanded with skill. Skippon, the Major-General, and Ireton were severely wounded. Fairfax, without a helmet, led his men in person in the thick of the fight. Cromwell had his morion cut from his head in single combat. On both sides the battle was fought with skill and courage. The preliminary manœuvres of the Parliament's army were those of scientific war; the

rally of the centre and the skilful co-operation of right wing with centre had displayed the discipline and mobility of an organised army. And the rapidity and steadiness with which the second order of battle was improvised bears the infallible stamp of the genius of Cromwell in the field—passionate energy in act, with imperturbable self-command, wariness, and presence of mind.

That very night Cromwell sent off his famous despatch to the Houses, wherein it is easy to see that he treated himself as practically general-in-chief; and in his almost menacing words on behalf of his Independents he is speaking already in the tone of a dictator. To this point he was now visibly arriving. First he creates a troop, then a regiment; soon he creates the Eastern Association and its army; he then develops the Association army into the New Model. The New Model had now concluded the first Civil War. And it was the master of the Parliament; indeed it was itself the real Parliament of the nation. His despatch, sent direct to Speaker, ends thus:—

“Sir—This is none other but the hand of God, and to Him alone belongs the glory, wherein none are to share with Him. The General served you with all faithfulness and honour; and the best commendation I can give him is, That I daresay he attributes all to God, and would rather perish than assume to himself. Which is an honest and a thriving way; and yet as much for bravery may be given to him, in this action, as to a man. Honest men served you faithfully in this action. Sir, they are trusty; I beseech you, in the name of God, not to discourage them. I wish this action may beget thankfulness and humility in all that are concerned in it. He that ventures his life for the liberty of his country, I wish he trust God for the liberty of his conscience,

and you for the liberty he fights for. In this he rests, who is your most humble servant, OLIVER CROMWELL."

For twelve months the army was in the south and west, stamping out what remained to the king in arms; and Cromwell was engaged, for the most part as second to Fairfax, in a constant succession of sieges. In the siege he is the same as in the field—careless of elaborate tactics, preferring direct storm, but ever watchful to adjust ends to means; risking nothing, but always choosing the straightest means which each case presents from hour to hour. In the conduct of a siege his method is historic, and the memory of it long clung round his name. There are few parts of England where one fails to meet some ruined castle or dismantled manor-house, of which the local rumour records "that it was battered down by Cromwell in the troubles." This is his plan. Suddenly appearing in full force before a place, he summons it peremptorily, with the threat to put the defenders to the sword. If this first display of force does not succeed, he chooses a vulnerable point, steadily pours in shot from his cannon till a practicable breach is effected. Then if surrender is offered, he grants it on favourable terms. If not, carefully disposing his force for simultaneous attack, and preparing reserves for the main rush, he makes the signal early for a sudden storm. The storming parties pour in, following each other with desperate energy at all costs till the place is won. Of these sieges the most important was the capture of Bristol and the extinction of Rupert: the most brilliant the storm of Basing, with its carnage and destruction. In the course of some sixteen months (April 1645–August 1646) the historian of the New Model enumerates

upwards of sixty successful encounters, about fifty strong places taken, more than 1000 cannon, 40,000 arms, and 250 colours.

During these operations the army was much annoyed by the peasantry. Cromwell's dealing with the Clubmen, —bands of half-armed countrymen, numbering some thousands, and playing much the part of the *francs-tireurs* of modern war—was a model of moderation, firmness, and tact. By a mixture of sound argument, vigorous handling, and kindly good sense, he speedily dispersed these troublesome bands—sent “the poor silly creatures” to their homes. Bristol was stormed and taken on the 10th and 11th of September, and the long and exact despatch of Cromwell was by the general's order sent direct to the Speaker Lenthall. It was a large city, regularly entrenched and fortified, held by some 4000 men. The works were far too extensive to be properly invested by so moderate a force. The storm began at one in the morning of the 10th; it was a desperate service, stubbornly contested foot by foot. On the following day Rupert surrendered, and is heard of in arms no more. There were taken 150 cannon, 100 barrels of powder, shot, and arms, and 4000 men. The loss of the Parliament's army was less than 200.

Cromwell's despatch to the Speaker gives us an exact account of these skilful and vigorous operations. And then he abruptly bursts into the famous appeal, so little like the language of a lieutenant-general to a Parliament, or of a soldier to his Government,—a veritable sermon, almost an allocution, such as Knox or Latimer might have uttered from the pulpit to their sovereign, almost

as a Gregory or an Innocent might have spoken to a feudal prince :—

“Thus I have given you a true, but not a full account of this great business ; wherein he that runs may read, That all this is none other than the work of God. He must be a very Atheist who doth not acknowledge it.

“It may be thought that some praises are due to those gallant men, of whose valour so much mention is made :—their humble suit to you and all that have an interest in this blessing, is, That in the remembrance of God’s praises they be forgotten. It’s their joy that they are instruments of God’s glory and their country’s good. It’s their honour that God vouchsafes to use them. Sir, they that have been employed in this service know, that faith and prayer obtained this City for you : I do not say ours only, but of the people of God with you and all England over, who have wrestled with God for a blessing in this very thing. Our desires are, that God may be glorified by the same spirit of faith by which we ask all our sufficiency, and have received it. It is meet that He have all the praise. Presbyterians, Independents, all have here the same spirit of faith and prayer ; the same presence and answer ; they agree here, have no names of difference ; pity it is it should be otherwise anywhere ! All that believe, have the real unity, which is most glorious ; because inward, and spiritual, in the Body, and to the Head. For being united in forms, commonly called Uniformity, every Christian will for peace-sake study and do, as far as conscience will permit. *And for brethren, in things of the mind we look for no compulsion, but that of light and reason.* In other things, God hath put the sword in the Parliament’s hands, —for the terror of evil-doers, and the praise of them that do well. If any plead exemption from that,—he knows not the Gospel : if any would wring that out of your hands, or steal it from you under what pretence soever, I hope they shall do it without effect. That God may maintain it in your hands, and direct you in the use thereof, is the prayer of your humble servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.”

Winchester surrendered on the 6th of October, after

two days' bombarding, with 680 men, 7 cannon, with a loss of less than 12 men. "Sir," wrote Cromwell to Fairfax, "this is the addition of another mercy. You see God is not weary in doing you good." The prisoners complained of being robbed contrary to articles. Cromwell had the six men accused tried: all were found guilty, one by lot was hanged, and five were sent to the Royalist governor at Oxford, who returned them "with an acknowledgment of the Lieutenant-General's nobleness."

Basing House, an immense fortress, with a feudal castle and a Tudor palace within its ramparts, had long been a thorn in the side of the Parliament. Four years it had held out, with an army within, well provisioned for years, and blocked the road to the west. At last it was resolved to take it; and Cromwell was directly commissioned by Parliament to the work. Its capture is one of the most terrible and stirring incidents of the war. After six days' constant cannonade, the storm began at six o'clock in the morning of the 14th of October. After some hours of desperate fighting, one after another its defences were taken, and its garrison put to the sword or taken. The plunder was prodigious; the destruction of property unsparing. It was gutted, burnt, and the very ruins carted away. The night before the storm Cromwell spent much time in prayer,—his chaplain records that "he seldom fights without some text of Scripture to support him." This time his text was from the 115th Psalm—"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake. . . . Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands. . . . They that make them are

like unto them ; so is every one that trusteth in them." Basing House was an old "nest of idolatry"; its owner, the Marquis of Winchester, was one of the great chiefs of the Catholics in England. And as Cromwell and his Ironsides stormed into the proud old stronghold and tore it to fragments, they were full of the spirit in which Samuel had hewed Agag in pieces.

Cromwell's despatch to the Speaker is a typical example of many such a piece. "Sir, I thank God," he writes, "I can give you a good account of Basing,"—bursting in on the Parliament with the fury of battle still hot within him. Then comes the clear, quiet, nervous and brief story of the storm. Then a paragraph full of strategic sagacity, urging and almost dictating the immediate razing of the fortress. "Sir, I hope not to delay, but to march towards the west to-morrow." Then the repeated appeals to the House in the tone of a preacher not a soldier, which in Cromwell's mouth most certainly were not idle phrases—

"The Lord grant that these mercies may be acknowledged with all thankfulness: God exceedingly abounds in His goodness to us, and will not be weary until righteousness and peace meet, and until He hath brought forth a glorious work for the happiness of this poor kingdom, wherein desires to serve God and you with a faithful heart your most humble servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL"

Castle after castle, town after town, regiment after regiment surrendered, as Cromwell and Fairfax rode fast and struck hard from side to side. In March, Sir Ralph Hopton, with 4000 men, 2000 arms, and 20 colours, surrendered in Cornwall; and Sir Jacob Astley, the last commander in the field, in Gloucestershire. In

April Donnington Castle was taken : and now the king, wandering aimlessly about, surrendered himself to the Scots at Newark. Oxford, with some 3000 men and 300 cannon, surrendered in June, and Ragland Castle in August 1646.

The First Civil War was over.

CHAPTER VI

BETWEEN THE CIVIL WARS

A.D. 1646-1648. *ÆTAT.* 47-49

THE three years which elapsed between the defeat of the king and his death on the scaffold (1646-49) are the most intricate and obscure of the Civil War, and they form the period in which the action of Cromwell can be least definitely traced. It was a long triangular duel between the king, the Parliament, and the army: the king, with wonderful pertinacity and no little subtlety, intriguing to recover his authority intact; the Houses bent on formal Parliamentary government and Presbyterian despotism; the army bent on real constitutional guarantees and liberty of conscience. The main struggle lay between the Parliament and the army: the main question being Presbyterian orthodoxy, or Bible freedom. But the dead weight of conservatism that still clung round the fallen monarchy, and the unflagging ingenuity of Charles, made the Crown still a powerful factor in the contest; whilst the political interests were far too real to be long merged in any religious quarrel. Parliament was controlled by Presbyterians, who, in their eagerness to secure Presbyterian ascendancy, were ready to restore the monarchy with merely nominal guarantees. The

army, which consisted mainly of Independents, and was inspired by men who were zealots for civil and religious freedom, was resolved to prevent—if need be by force—either Presbyterian domination or restoration of the old monarchy. As Charles wrote to Digby with no little astuteness, he hoped to draw either the Presbyterians or the Independents “to side with me for extirpating one another, and I shall be really king again.” In the end, after three years of intricate manœuvres conducted on all sides with great audacity and craft, the army won, forced the Parliament to become their tool, and brought the king to the block.

A course of policy so complex and shifting cannot be set forth in the limits of this *Life*. And as the part which was played in it by Cromwell is still traceable only by indirect evidence, and was constantly varied by the progress of events, it cannot be stated otherwise than in general outline. The plan of this book does not admit of the discussion of authorities or the narrative of events in which Cromwell himself intervened occasionally and indirectly. It was beyond his power to do more than this. As pre-eminently a practical statesman, and what is now called an opportunist, he had no settled policy, no doctrine, no single purpose to achieve. He struck in, first here, then there, as occasion arose; changing his tactics and his objects as new combinations or fresh situations developed. Although an Independent to the backbone, and siding essentially with the army, he is far too large a statesman not to see the strong points both of king and of Parliament—not to feel all the evils of a revolutionary army. He stands above all parties, alternately using all and controlling all.

Nor is there any problem more difficult than exactly to follow Cromwell's policy in all its details. For this part of his life there is exceedingly little direct and unimpeachable authority. There is a large body of disconnected anecdotes, more or less resting on contemporary authorities, mostly hostile, of very various trustworthiness, and all capable of different explanations. They are for the most part so characteristic and plausible that it is difficult to doubt but that they rest at bottom on fact. But the time, place, circumstances of them are all-important, as are the facts that led up to them, and which followed them; and it is just in these that the authority of the "Memoirs" is least satisfactory. The result of a patient balancing of authorities is all that can here be given. Much must be left to the estimate we form of Cromwell as a whole. The probabilities are all on the side of a belief that the ultimate result was mainly shaped by him; that all the critical turns in this long and arduous political game were inspired by his genius, and bear marks of his mastery over men.

This too is the point at which we first note complaints of his ambition, duplicity, and intrigue; his abandonment by his early friends; and the public and private animosities which continued to gather round him, growing throughout the rest of his life. It is the too familiar story of the great man in a troubled crisis. And no statesman of equal rank in the modern history of Europe comes forth from the ordeal of disparagement more nobly. Through all these tangled times Oliver Cromwell remains unswervingly true to his great design: to secure responsible government without anarchy, and freedom of conscience without intolerance. These great

ends were to him far dearer than parties, institutions, or persons ; and for them he would sacrifice in turn parties, institutions, and persons. If he could have saved responsible government without destroying the monarchy, he would have done it. If he could have established a Parliamentary system without misrule and religious oppression, he would have done it. Had he desired an army despotism, he would have worked it out directly, without reference to Parliament or king. Had he aimed at personal power, he would not have risked life and popularity so often in the cause of law, order, and Parliament.

But it is not given to human genius to guide a seething revolution to a great issue without wounding to the heart even good and honest men ; without resorting to methods which are not those of perfect saintliness ; without reticence, suspicion, change of purpose, much secret counsel, and much using of men to the point where they cease to be useful. Irritation, opposition, calumny are the natural result. And the greater the superiority of the leader to his contemporaries, the more profound is the opposition and misunderstanding he meets. For all his mighty brain and great soul, Oliver Cromwell was no perfect hero, or spotless saint. Doubtless the fine edge of candour was rudely worn down by a long career of indirect policy. The master of men is never wholly amiable or absolutely frank. The man who often changes his front in the heat of battle always seems a time-server to duller minds. The man who takes up the task for which he knows himself only to be fit, always seems ambitious to those whom he thrusts aside.

Nor was Cromwell without the defects of his qualities. A somewhat coarse humour and a weakness for horse-play sat strangely on a man who was certainly consumed within with profound and silent designs. The habit of extempore expounding cannot be indulged without harm. And doubtless the taste for improving the occasion became at last a snare to Cromwell, ending even with him, as it ended with others, in no little unction, mannerism—even self-deception. A certain profusion of tears, of hyperbolic asseverations and calling God to witness, an excessive expression of each passing emotion which grew with the habit of spiritual stimulants—these are things too well attested and too consonant with the tone of his generation to suffer us to doubt that Cromwell's nature was more than touched by the disease. It was touched, but not poisoned. He had some of the weakness as well as all the strength of the mighty Puritanism of which he is the incarnation and the hero. But all these unlovely failings, which in truthfulness we note, disappear in a larger view of the essential grandeur, sincerity, and devoutness of the man.

The relative strength of the three parties was this. By his defeat and imprisonment, Charles gained rather than lost in the moral strength of his position. Men no longer feared his vengeance as a conqueror; they were no longer irritated by the outrages of his soldiers; he had lost his dangerous power, but he was still lawful king. The great majority of the nation could imagine no stable government except in the king's name; the legal and executive machinery was hardly workable without him. Captivity put an end to his arbitrary acts, and gave scope for his personal dignity and

courage. He still retained the passionate devotion of Church, aristocracy, and large sections of the country-people. Nay, we are accustomed to rate the ability of Charles Stuart too low. Cromwell said: "The king is a man of great parts and great understanding." In truth Charles showed, both in peace and war, singular tenacity, a very shrewd eye for a difficult situation, and a curious subtlety in intrigue, akin to that of an Italian statesman. Had he been Pope or Spanish governor, dealing with Italians or Flemings, it is quite likely that he would have won. His incurable weakness was that he never shook off the Machiavelian or Medicean "Prince," and never understood the nature of Englishmen.

The House of Commons was now in its seventh year, and had lost touch with the country. Reduced by withdrawals and expulsions to a mere shadow of itself, it had partly filled up its ranks by new elections which were neither legal nor regular. Its constitutional position, which in the midst of war had been accepted of necessity, was incurably bad as a normal institution. An assembly which recognised the right of none to dissolve it, which had ejected a majority of its own members, and which had governed for years by arbitrary decrees enforced, if at all, by the power of the sword, was little more than a revolutionary committee. Both Houses, or what remained of them, were controlled by fanatical Presbyterians, by officers discarded at the New Model, by self-important lawyers, and city magnates. But Parliament still possessed three great advantages. The victories had been won by its soldiers in its name; it had the sole command of the taxing power; and it was the one constitutional authority re-

maining. It had still in its ranks bold, able, and sincere men; it had the devoted support of London and the Presbyterian clergy. Its weakness was this—that whilst its claim to sovereignty could only be admitted in a state of war, it no longer represented the country, and was openly hostile to the power which had defeated Charles.

That power was the army, the flower of all that was earnest, brave, and zealous in Puritanism: men who for years had fought, bled, and submitted to the sternest discipline for the Cause, at their own cost, and without hope of reward. They were what in continental theories would be known as the “active citizens” in the great contest; wont to discuss, pray, and preach over every occasion. Such an army of volunteers, carefully selected by their officers on Cromwell’s own model, all uncongenial elements being gradually weeded out, men who in scores of combats had never known one defeat, as soldiers had endured an iron discipline for years, but as citizens and Christians had been encouraged to debate every incident of the day. They thus united the combative enthusiasm of the Protestant martyrs to the skill and experience of Caesar’s legionaries. Though as troopers the world has never seen their superiors, they remained politicians and zealots of intense activity. As the war closed and the struggle between them and the Parliament grew acute, they formed themselves into an organised political body. The officers formed a council; and the men chose delegates, two for each company or troop, known as Agitators.

This organisation could hardly have existed without Cromwell’s approval. And there is every reason to

believe that he promoted, if he did not originate it. He recognised, supported, and worked with it: mainly using Ireton as his agent. Every step in the negotiations was referred to this double council, which regularly consulted its constituents in the ranks. It was thus a real Parliament; much more truly representative than that at Westminster, better organised, and with more political alertness. It was indeed more truly in touch with the voting power in the kingdom. The subsidiary elections to Parliament had returned an immense majority of men in sympathy with the Independents, and amongst them Fairfax, Ludlow, Ireton, Fleetwood, Blake, Sidney, and Hutchinson. A force like this, more than twenty thousand strong, with such leaders and with all the prestige of victory and unbroken success, were the true masters of England. Even as a representative and political body, they were morally stronger than the remnant at Westminster. What they lacked was any legal or constitutional right. Of this they were quite conscious. They were ready to recognise to the full, and even to overrate, the legal and constitutional right of the Parliament. The name of "the Commons of England" still overawed them.

But the struggle between the Parliament and the army was not a mere contest of Law against the Sword, Right against Might. Both Parliament and army were revolutionary bodies, formed out of the exigencies of civil war. The army had no legal right, and they claimed none. But they had a preponderance of moral right to represent the victorious side, almost as great as their preponderance of material force. From the point of view of law, the Parliament which now sat in

Westminster had scarcely more technical right than the army; yet they exercised arbitrary powers which the cessation of war made every day more irregular. But the Revolution, which had arisen out of legal problems, and had so long been carried on under the forms of ancient law and custom, was still for three years longer continued under the semblance of quasi-constitutional methods. And no men felt this more thoroughly than Cromwell and the chiefs of the army. The Parliament, therefore, still remained, at least in name, the official embodiment of the nation.

Cromwell returned to Parliament on the 23d of April 1646, whilst the king was still at the head of an army in Oxford, and still had forces and castles in various places. The Lieutenant-General was received with honours and rewards. From thenceforth for more than a year his activity is mainly in Parliament, from whence he watches and influences events. In the army he was the second man in rank and the first in repute. In the House of Commons he was hardly in the first line and was surrounded by bitter enemies. It is inconceivable that a general, bent on founding a military dictatorship, would have left the army, in the act of reaping the fruits of its victories, to place himself in a Parliament where he never publicly shone. But Parliament was the proper authority to conclude the struggle; and Parliament, rightly advised, had the power to do so. No sooner was the king in the hands of the Scots than all men perceived the importance of controlling his person, and getting rid of the Scotch army. The disbanding of the army, the establishment of Presbyterianism, the control of the king, and the return home of the Scots—

all rested alike with Parliament. To the House, therefore, came Cromwell, but more to confer than to speak.

It was at this epoch in his career that Cromwell married two of his daughters, and arranged for the marriage of his eldest son, in families of his own rank: simple country gentlemen, devoted to the cause. Bridget married Ireton, Cromwell's "other self"; Elizabeth married John Claypole—both in 1646. Richard's marriage to Dorothy Mayor was proposed in 1647, but not carried out till 1649, on the eve of the Irish campaign. They were not the alliances that a Bonaparte would have sought. In 1646 the Cromwell household removed from Ely to London, and were modestly lodged in Westminster.

During the long and intricate negotiations between the king, the Parliament, and the Scots, the army and the Independents looked on with anxiety and watchfulness, but did not actively interfere. That was also the attitude of Cromwell, who formed the connecting link between Parliament and the army. From brief sentences in his letters, and from the less trustworthy source of the "Memoirs," we gather that the Lieutenant-General watched with indignation the growing hostility to the army amongst the Parliamentary leaders, the Presbyterians, and the city. Had the king accepted the Covenant and the terms of Parliament, the cause of the Independents, and, indeed, the future of England, might have been at stake. One who knew Charles would have rested easy that this was impossible; and though a doubtful story suggests that Cromwell had secretly encouraged the king to refuse the terms of the Parliament, it was sufficiently notorious that the Independents

would not have required him to accept the Covenant. Cromwell appears to have concurred in the efforts to pay and get rid of the Scots. And this was successfully accomplished in January 1647.

So soon as the Scots were paid off and had returned home, leaving the king with the Parliament, a direct conflict ensued between the Houses and the army. To disband the army was to crush Independency (which then was practically Dissent) and to neutralise the Generals (who had so great extra-Parliamentary authority). And thus the disbanding of the army was the dominant idea of the Presbyterian leaders in Parliament. In March they began to raise a new force to defend the city against the army. "There want not, in all places," wrote Cromwell to Fairfax, "men who have so much malice against the army as besots them." And in the same month the advisers of the army were declared by Parliament to be "enemies of the State." From this hour the army was in a mutinous attitude, refusing to disband till its demands were satisfied, and so it continued for six months till Parliament submitted.

Cromwell's task was indeed a difficult one. No soldier had ever a greater horror of mutiny, and no statesman more completely understood that the settlement of the kingdom must be at once legal and Parliamentary. The army had force; but it could put no pressure on the king, and could not grant to itself indemnities and arrears. The work of Cromwell was so to use the army as to compel the Parliament to come to a settlement in a certain way, and yet not to set up the anarchy of an armed mob. Backwards and forwards he passes during April and May between army and Parlia-

ment, moderating and guiding the demands of the army, and presenting them to Parliament in their least offensive light. It became manifest that the Presbyterian leaders in their hostility to the army were prepared to make any terms with the king; there was even talk of arresting Cromwell. Charles and the Parliament together, if they had come to terms, could have made a legal settlement, which for the moment would have been accepted by the nation, leaving every question open and every soldier who had fought in the war liable for treason. A series of rapid and bold strokes changed the whole aspect of affairs.

On the 2d of June Cromwell suddenly left London for the army, and on that same day a strong body of horse under Joyce, a cornet of Fairfax's guard, took the king out of the custody of the Parliament's commissioners, and with every show of respect carried him off to the army. On the 4th took place a brilliant review; and within a few days the whole army, 21,000 strong, was gathered round Newmarket. Thence, on the 10th, they issued their famous Manifesto, and marching, to St. Albans, openly threatened the city and Parliament. The Manifesto, held to be Cromwell's own draft, demanded satisfaction for themselves, the removal of their accusers, and a real settlement of the kingdom before they were themselves disbanded. The army threatened, and waited at a respectful distance; but the threat was not enough. The city became a prey to confusion; the House of Commons was invaded by a city mob; yet neither Parliament nor city gave way. Thereupon the army marched on in earnest. On 3d of August it occupied and entered London. The Speaker

and the Independent leaders sought refuge with the army ; the Presbyterian leaders withdrew ; the city was respectful ; and the House of Commons yielded.

Thus, on the 3d of August 1647, the army visibly assumed the chief authority in the State. Fairfax was solemnly received and thanked by Parliament ; the troops marched, crowned with laurel branches, through the streets to Westminster, and then through the city, every approach being occupied in military fashion. As the victors of Marston, Naseby, and Basing tramped through London in splendid array and perfect discipline, horse, foot, and artillery, with drums, trumpets, and colours, "in so civil and orderly a manner, that not the least offence or prejudice was offered by them to any man, either in words, action, or gestures, as they marched," the citizens were at once reassured and overawed. They saw before them an organised body of men, irresistible in strength, and resolved to carry out their purpose, but with no element of disorder or personal motive. From this day, in fact, the Parliament had visibly ceased to be sovereign. It accepted a master, and consented to lend its name to the decision of others.

This was the real "usurpation" and military dictatorship. But it was accomplished officially by Fairfax in person. The names of Parliament and of Constitution too often dispose men to treat this act as an invasion of legal authority by the sword. It was undoubtedly an act of force and of revolution. But so was the entire Civil War. Neither Parliament nor army had strict law on their side, nor a clear majority of the nation. But the cause that the army represented was the higher and the truer : the cause which has ultimately prevailed.

Both Parliament and army appealed to force, and the force of the army was immeasurably the greater. The part which Cromwell took in this series of events is not yet quite proved; but there is every reason to believe that it was all in the main essentially his work. No general order could issue to the army without the knowledge and assent of Fairfax, Cromwell, and Ireton. These three were practically one. Cromwell was now called in the pamphlets *Dominus factotum*. The mysterious seizure of the king, with the simultaneous muster at Newmarket, the army Manifesto, and the march on London, were all master-strokes—timed, concerted, and executed with the unity and precision of a great strategist. The abduction of the king showed a genius for manœuvre, and the triumphal march through the city showed a mastery of explosive forces, such as mark but one man only in that age. And those who incline to see merely the intriguing ambition of a tyrant must remember that it was the policy approved by Fairfax, Ireton, Fleetwood, Hutchinson, Milton, and thousands of the most single-minded heroes who ever entered into civic strife.

The surrender of the Parliament and possession of the king entirely changed the position of the army, and with it the policy of Cromwell. The army chiefs had encouraged political action amongst the soldiers, but they were now anxious to moderate it; whilst they laboured to reconcile the Presbyterian and Independent parties, and to come to terms directly with the king. So momentous a work as the making such an army the visible master of England could not be carried through without grave political and social consequences. A strong and earnest party of Commonwealth's men con-

tained some of the most honourable of the Puritans, such as Vane, Ludlow, Sidney, Hutchinson, Milton, and Marvell. But in the army was found the hotbed and centre not only of the Commonwealth, but of various political and social movements, showing nearly all the phases of new ideas which the history of later revolutions has made familiar. The most definite of these groups were the party known as Levellers, who, in spite of their nickname, did not maintain Communism, but what in modern political language is known as the doctrine of Political Equality.

The army had long played the part of the "clubs" and "sections" in the French revolutions; of the "leagues" and "associations" of English reform; and nearly every type of modern radicalism was duly represented in the army demands, short, perhaps, of formal Socialism. Republicanism, sovereignty of Parliament, annual or biennial elections, extension and equalisation of the suffrage, local self-government, codification of the law, complete religious liberty, and equal political rights, were repeatedly pressed on Parliament and proclaimed as rights. And now the army was becoming the real House of Commons. The Parliament occupied relatively the position we are wont to attribute to the present House of Lords—an assembly without which a legal settlement is impossible, but which, in the long run, must virtually submit to the more popular authority. Now Cromwell was a statesman, not a theorist. Though an enemy of arbitrary monarchy, and ever eager for practical reform, he had no leaning in principle either to a republic or a democracy. He was by temper and conviction no radical. Circumstances, indeed, made him

what, by a happy paradox, has been called "a conservative revolutionist." Thus it came to pass that no sooner was the army master, than Cromwell laboured to control it.

Turning a deaf ear to Levellers and Commonwealth's men, Cromwell was engaged for months in the effort to make terms with the king directly. Communications had probably begun even before the seizure of the king by Joyce, an act to which Charles showed little objection and hardly even surprise. But when the victorious army carried the king about with them, Cromwell and Ireton were in daily relations with him. The task they undertook was transcendently difficult, if not impossible. They had to find a basis of settlement which the king would accept, and yet one that the army would not reject; and then, if king and army agreed, it would have to be adopted by the Parliament, which alone could make a legal settlement. For months the subtle and inventive brains of the two generals were pitted against the incurable perfidy of the Stuart; and the personal relations between the fallen sovereign and his rebel officers became not only courteous, but intimate and friendly. The troopers saw with increasing irritation their great general becoming a courtier, and almost a confidential adviser of the king. If the anecdote-mongers may be trusted, Cromwell loudly expressed his warm interest in the king, not only as a man, but as an institution. He is reported to have said that no men could enjoy their lives and estates quietly without the king had his rights. The grumblings of the army swelled into open accusations, and even, it is said, into plots to assassinate Charles and Cromwell. Things

reached such a pitch that he was forced to stop the public access to himself of the king's agents. But still he struggled on to replace Charles on his throne by a legal settlement of the nation.

Why did he make an effort so obstinate and so dangerous? Why did he abandon it, and as eagerly work for the king's dethronement and execution? The exact steps in his policy are not quite traced, but the general course of it is plain. Cromwell was a man who by temper and opinion was perfectly willing to accept the monarchic and social constitution as he found it, up to the point where it became impracticable or mischievous. He was not given to visions of a future, and not eager after new constitutions. He still believed that the republicans were a small minority, and that English society was not workable without a monarchy. Cromwell, like so many great statesmen, was never in the van of the movement, but always just ahead of the central force. He was now, in 1647, convinced that there could be no settlement without a king. And he risked reputation, power, and life, to effect a settlement with the king.

Having strained his influence almost to the bursting point, he suddenly changed front. Nearly all through 1647 we find him negotiating a monarchic settlement. Early in 1648 he denounced the king in Parliament. What explains the change? Two things essentially. The growing violence of the Commonwealth party in the army; and the conviction that the king was intriguing, not for a settlement at all, but for a new civil war. Long and ominous were the warnings that told Cromwell the temper of the army. His own life, that of Charles, a new war, a military revolt, the solution of all discipline

were at stake. The mutiny at Ware could not but cost the general much cruel searching of heart. His severity was "absolutely necessary," as he told Ludlow, "to keep things from falling into confusion." On 15th November two regiments appeared at a review without orders and with mutinous papers in their hats, with the motto "England's freedom and soldiers' rights." Cromwell, with a few officers, rode up to them, and with thunder in his brow, ordered them to take out the papers. One regiment obeyed; the other refused. Ordering eleven men from the ranks by name, he tried them on the spot by court-martial, condemned three to death, and shot one. It was a terrible moment; which must have burnt its lessons into the army and into the general.

On the other hand, Cromwell at last fathomed the perfidy of the king. Charles held himself to be one who was by divine ordinance incapable of binding himself by any agreement. The famous story of the letter to the queen concealed in a saddle which Cromwell and Ireton discovered, though it professes to come from Cromwell's own lips, may or may not be true in its details; but it is the picturesque expression of an important truth. Cromwell, with or without intercepted letters, at last discovered that the king was only playing with him in all these negotiations for a settlement, whilst he was really occupied in stirring up a new war. Once satisfied of this, Cromwell turned upon Charles Stuart the whole force of his loathing and enmity. Cromwell was accustomed, both earlier and later, to deal with astute men, and to meet them on equal terms in tortuous and secret paths. He was himself far from being an Israelite without guile. He had probably by

this time persuaded himself that in diplomacy, as in war, stratagems with an opponent are lawful parts of the game. He, no doubt, did not show Charles his whole mind ; nor did he expect Charles to show his whole mind to him. But with the king it was different. The king in these long negotiations was not negotiating at all ; he was only laying a trap. He was solemnly debating a treaty, when he never intended to keep any treaty at all. And this at last Cromwell came to see was not diplomacy, but incurable perfidy.

Nor was it merely the perfidy of a helpless prisoner. The Scotch Presbyterians were now brought round to the side of their king. A large body in Parliament were once more inclined to the same result. In east, west, and north cavaliers were again arming. And between a Scotch invasion, new Royalist musters, intrigues in Parliament, and Presbyterian jealousy, the army was in imminent peril that they and their cause would perish. The near prospect of the Second Civil War decided all. And now, with all that he had fought for at stake, with a fresh tide of blood rising, with the army itself in chronic mutiny, and the noblest spirits in the army clamouring incessantly for "justice," Cromwell at last gave way ; resolved to strike down the throne, the rallying point of all disorder ; and to bring to trial the "man of blood," who, in spite of every effort, was obstinately bent on renewing the war.

Dark and fierce were the prayers and outpourings of heart with which the Ironsides sought the Lord as the Second Civil War gathered round them. The fiery words of the Hebrew prophets had heated their brains ; and the Biblical notions of "atonement" and "the

avenger of blood" had grown into sacred moral obligations. To their morbid fanaticism the cause of blood-guiltiness lay upon the land, until he on whose doorpost it rested had atoned for his sins. With the vivid consciousness that each of them might yet be called to answer with his neck before the earthly judge, was mingled a real awe of the heavenly tribunal, if they suffered the guilt to cry aloud in the land. The Second Civil War seemed a judgment on their slackness and the carnal policy of their leaders. And as they buckled on their armour for a fresh campaign they resolved, amidst prayers and maledictions, that if the Lord brought them back in peace, the Chief Delinquent should be called to account.

CHAPTER VII

SECOND CIVIL WAR—TRIAL OF THE KING

A.D. 1648-1649. *ÆTAT.* 49

THE Second Civil War broke out in April, and proved to be a short but formidable affair. The whole of Wales was speedily in insurrection; a strong force of cavaliers were mustering in the north of England; in Essex, Surrey, and the southern counties various outbreaks arose; Berwick, Carlisle, Chester, Pembroke, Colchester, were held for the king; the fleet revolted; and 40,000 men were ordered by the Parliament of Scotland to invade England. Lambert was sent to the north; Fairfax to take Colchester; and Cromwell into Wales, and thence to join Lambert and meet the Scotch. On the 24th of May Cromwell reached Pembroke, but being short of guns, he did not take it till 11th July. The rising in Wales crushed, Cromwell turned northwards, where the north-west was already in revolt, and 20,000 Scots, under the Duke of Hamilton, were advancing into the country. Want of supplies and shoes, and sickness, detained him with his army, some 7000 strong, "so extremely harassed with hard service and long marches, that they seemed rather fit for a hospital than a battle."

Having joined Lambert in Yorkshire he fought the battle of Preston on 17th of August.

The battle of Preston was one of the most decisive and important victories ever gained by Cromwell, over the most numerous enemy he ever encountered, and the first in which he was in supreme command. Although the enemy's forces were nearly threefold his, well-armed, and of high courage, so great was the disparity in military skill, that it was rather a prolonged massacre than a battle. The engagements continued over three days, and nearly thirty miles of country. In the end the entire army of nearly 24,000 good troops were either killed, taken, or dispersed. Early on the morning of the 17th August Cromwell, with some 9000 men, fell upon the army of the Duke of Hamilton unawares, as it proceeded southwards in a long straggling, unprotected line. The invaders consisted of 17,000 Scots and 7000 good men from northern counties. The long ill-ordered line was cut in half and rolled back northward and southward, before they even knew that Cromwell was upon them. The great host, cut into sections, fought with desperation from town to town. But for three days it was one long chase and carnage, which ended only with the exhaustion of the victors and their horses. Ten thousand prisoners were taken. "We have killed we know not what," writes Cromwell, "but a very great number; having done execution upon them above thirty miles together, besides what we killed in the two great fights." His own loss was small, and but one superior officer.

The despatches of the general ring with the heat of battle and chase. It was no longer civil war; it

was the extermination of a host of alien invaders, whose success would have been the final ruin of the Cause.

"It pleased God to enable us to give them a defeat ; which I hope we shall improve, by God's assistance, to their utter ruin. . . . The invading army," he writes, "is dissipated. . . . In order to perfecting this work, we desire you to raise your Country ; and to improve your forces to the total ruin of that Enemy, which way soever they go ; and if you shall accordingly do your part, doubt not of their total ruin. . . . Thus you have their infantry totally ruined. . . . We have quite tired our horses in pursuit of the enemy : we have killed and disabled all their foot ; and left them only some horse. . . . If my horse could but trot after them, I would take them all. . . . Let all the counties about you be sent to, to rise with you and follow them."

It was, in very truth, the sword of the Lord and of Gideon. The largest army that ever gathered under the standard of King Charles had been utterly dissipated by a series of blows, swift, crushing, and unsparing.

The Scottish invaders dispersed, Cromwell hastened to recover Berwick and Carlisle, and to restore the Presbyterian or Whig party in Scotland. He advanced to Edinburgh, with abundant professions of his peaceful purpose, and with great precautions to enforce the strictest discipline. He entered Scotland, not as an invader, but as the ally of the party headed by the Marquis of Argyle, in opposition to the Duke of Hamilton. His task there was precisely that of the foreign general who interferes in the factions of the Greek or Italian republics to restore the "good" party and overawe the "bad" party. After a stay of a few weeks he took over Berwick and Carlisle, and advanced

into Yorkshire, to recover Pontefract Castle. This he found too strong to be taken without a regular siege train. He remained before Pontefract some weeks. But the train not arriving, he hastened to London, where the great crisis at last was imminent. It is from Yorkshire in this autumn that he writes those striking letters which open to us the very depths of his soul.

To Cromwell the Second Civil War was the unpardonable sin. God had manifested His will in the triumph of the army. To be slack, to be indulgent, was to struggle against His will. To struggle against that manifestation was to tempt God.

"Sir," he wrote on the battlefield of Preston, "this is nothin^o but the hand of God." To St. John he writes, "Let us all be not careful what men will make of these actings. They, will they, nill they, shall fulfil the good pleasure of God ; and we—shall serve our generations. Our rest we expect elsewhere : that will be durable." And then he tells how the poor godly man, dying the day before the battle, taking a handful of cut grass, said, "So too shall wither the army of the Scots," and immediately died. Parliament, he writes to Lord Wharton, does not seem conscious of the crisis. The victory at Preston he calls "this manifest token of His displeasure." "His most righteous witnessing against the army under Duke Hamilton." The bringing in of that army was "a more prodigious Treason than any that had been perfected before : . . . it is the repetition of the same offence against all the witnesses that God has borne." His officers, he says, "are amazed to see their blood held so cheap, and such manifest witnessings of God, so terrible and so just, no more revered." And to Fairfax he writes : "I find in the officers of the regiments a very great sense of the sufferings of this poor kingdom ; and in them all a very great zeal to have impartial justice done upon offenders. And I must confess, I do in all, from my heart concur with them ; and I verily

think and am persuaded they are things which God puts into our hearts" (20th November 1648).

The Ironsides were returning home to keep their word : and Cromwell was now as deeply resolved as any man to exact the uttermost farthing.

Of all the writings of Cromwell which have been preserved to us, the long letter to Colonel Hammond, of 25th November 1648, best reveals to us his inmost heart, in the very turning-point of his career. If ever a letter was the secret outpouring of the spirit to a beloved friend, it is this. If ever a difficult duty in a momentous crisis awaited a great statesman, it was now.

"Dear Robin," he writes to his young friend, the king's custodian at Newport, "no man rejoiceth more to see a line from thee than myself." He touches on his recent victories : "We have not been without our share of beholding some remarkable providences, and appearances of the Lord." His young friend was troubled,—had scruples about the king, about the army dictating to Parliament, about a minority forcing a majority. "Dear Robin," he writes, "thou and I were never worthy to be door-keepers in this Service. If thou wilt seek, seek to know the mind of God in all that chain of Providence." As to Parliament being a lawful authority, "Yes," he says, "but authorities may not do anything, and yet claim obedience. Is not *Salus Populi* a sound position ? Is it provided for in the pretended Treaty with the king ? Is not the whole fruit of the war like to be frustrated ? Is not this army a lawful power, called by God to oppose and fight against the king upon some stated grounds ? And may it not oppose one Name of Authority, as well as another name ? . . . My dear Friend," he goes on, "let us look into providences ; surely they mean somewhat. They hang so together ; have been so constant, so clear, unclouded." And then he argues the principle of passive obedience to the Parliament. "Mark how Providence turns the heart of so many against it." He knows "not one officer

among them, who is not with them. The difficulties and the enemies against them are not few, are all that is glorious in this world. The recent protest of the army against any treaty with the king may have been premature; but now it is out let us support it. Is the taking action in support of it a tempting of God, as the young Colonel seems to fear? No! Dear Robin, tempting of God is by acting presumptuously or in unbelief. Not the encountering of difficulties, makes us tempt God; but acting without faith. The treaty is 'a ruining hypocritical agreement.' Can we have good from 'this Man—against whom the Lord hath witnessed?'” A great crisis was at hand, and Cromwell earnestly seeks to win his young friend, “because my soul loves thee, and I would not have thee swerve.”

The letter did not find Hammond at Newport; and Cromwell having despatched it, hurried to London, where the great drama of king and Parliament was closing to its climax.

On 20th of November the army by Colonel Ewer presented to Parliament its protest against the “hypocritical agreement” with the king. On the 25th it backed this up by advancing to Windsor. On the 27th Colonel Ewer removed Colonel Hammond from his duty about the king, and the following day he removed the king to the mainland and secured him in Hurst Castle. Charles was now for the first time a real prisoner. On the 30th the House rejects the “Remonstrance”; and the army marches upon London, which it reaches on Saturday, 2d December, and quietly quarters itself round Whitehall. On Monday, 4th, as if in defiance of the army, the House approved the Newport treaty, after an all-night sitting. On Wednesday the 6th, Colonel Rich's regiment of horse were paraded in Palace Yard, Colonel Pride's regiment of foot in Westminster Hall. There

Colonel Pride, with Lord Grey as his prompter, arrests forty-one members, and on the following day more than sixty others. This is "Pride's Purge." Cromwell came to town that night, when the first act was over. He declared that "he had not been acquainted with this design; yet since it was done he was glad of it, and would endeavour to maintain it." The next day he received the thanks of the House, whilst the Purge was completed at its doors.

"Pride's Purge" was the most revolutionary of the three great acts of force by which the army coerced the Parliament. In August 1647 Parliament submitted to the will of the army without actual force being used, and without breach of any constitutional form. Cromwell's dismissal of the Rump in April 1652 was the virtual dissolution of the mere ghost of a Parliament by a *de facto* dictator. But Pride's Purge was bare military violence, like any modern *coup d'état*. It was carried out under orders from headquarters, with the consent and in the name of Fairfax, the Commander-in-Chief, by the general's staff, and was mainly contrived by Ireton and Ludlow. Cromwell, like Fairfax, adopted and accepted it; but he did not direct it. He probably was not consulted; or Ludlow, his old enemy, who gives us all the secret consultations, would have told us so. During these rapid transactions he was busy with his army in the north, and had been absent from headquarters for seven months. His letter to Hammond shows that he did not know of the colonel's dismissal, and that he thought the Remonstrance premature. There is no direct evidence of the part which Cromwell took in the army proceedings of the autumn of 1648. Yet he could

not have left them with unconcern. What probably happened was this. There was an understanding between the generals in May that the army should have its way, if need be by force. On general matters, Cromwell was consulted and advised. But so far as he was concerned, he probably was content to leave overt action, the time, the mode, and the persons, to Fairfax, his commander, and to Ireton, his "other self."

It is with Pride's Purge in 1648, and not with Cromwell's dismissal in 1653, that the Long Parliament of 1640 virtually ends. Three hundred and fifty members voted in the division which occasioned it. The divisions after it did not exceed fifty-three. The House, its officials, those who sat in it, and those who accepted its decisions, after such an act as that of 6th December, were plainly content to accept the name of Parliament without the reality.

The purging of the House was the means to bring about the will of the army. And the will of the army was to close the era of timorous compromise by bringing to judgment "the man of blood." The trial, condemnation, and beheading of the king belong to the History of England, and not to the Life of Cromwell. It was essentially the act of the army, and in a special sense of Ireton. It was not Cromwell's own conception, nor did he easily adopt it. He long struggled against it, risked life and reputation in the combat. At length he gave way, probably about the time of the second outbreak of war. The Scottish invasion, the victory at Preston, the very catastrophe of the invaders decided him. And in the overwhelming defeat of the Royalists he saw the finger of God pointing to judgment on the contriver of

all these horrors. Having taken up this duty, and seeing Parliament prostrate by no direct act of his own, he became one of the keenest and most obdurate of all the judges of the Stuart.

In the Court of Justice Oliver is always present. In the death-warrant of 29th January 1649, next after the President and Lord Grey, stands the name of Oliver Cromwell. He accepted the responsibility of it, justified, defended it to his dying day. No man in England was more entirely answerable for the deed than he. "I tell you," he said to Algernon Sidney, "we will cut off his head with the crown upon it." Traditions tell that he pressed other officers to sign, that he smeared Henry Marten's face with ink as he signed, and stood by the coffin and gazed upon the corpse. It may be, for Cromwell was strange, passionate, and stern in supreme moments; and he knew better than others all that this portentous deed implied.

To him and to his Ironsides to bring the king to judgment was no mere act of earthly justice; it was a sacred duty enjoined by the inward voice and outward signs of God Himself. To show mercy to this Agag was flagrant rebellion against God's will. For seven years the land had swam in blood, ruin, and confusion. And of all that Charles Stuart was the root and contriver. But Cromwell was not only a Puritan, saturated with Biblical canons of morality and justice: he was also a profound statesman. He had struggled, against hope and inclination, for a monarchic settlement of the grand dispute. Slowly he had come to know—not only that the man, Charles Stuart, was incurably treacherous, but that any settlement of Parliament with the old Feudal

Monarchy was impossible. As the head of the king rolled on the scaffold the old Feudal Monarchy expired for ever. In January 1649 a great mark was set in the course of the national life—the Old Rule behind it, the New Rule before it. Parliamentary government, the consent of the nation, equality of rights, and equity in the law—all date from this great New Departure. The Stuarts indeed returned for one generation, but with the sting of the Old Monarchy gone, and only to disappear almost without a blow. The Church of England returned ; but not the Church of Laud or of Charles. The peers returned, but as a meek House of Lords, with their castles razed, their feudal rights and their political power extinct. It is said that the regicides killed Charles I. only to make Charles II. king. It is not so. They killed the Old Monarchy ; and the restored monarch was by no means its heir, but a royal Stadtholder or Hereditary President. In 1649, when Charles I. ceased to live, the true monarchy of England ceased to reign. Oliver Cromwell was for ten years supreme ruler ; whilst Charles II. was a despised and forgotten exile. The monarchies, peerages, and churches of the civilised world roared with horror and rage ; but in five years the rage was spent, and England was settling into new lines, which might possibly have been permanent, and which certainly prepared her present constitutional system. The solemn judgment of Charles Stuart as a traitor to his people, as a public officer who had criminally abused his trust, gave a new life to the history of England, and ultimately to the modern history of Europe.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CAMPAIGN IN IRELAND

A.D. 1649-1650. *ÆTAT.* 50-51

BY the execution of the king the whole situation was changed. What had been a rebellion under legal forms became a real revolution ; in the room of the Parliament men saw a Council of State ; in the room of the monarchy, a Commonwealth ; and Cromwell was left the one commanding person on either side.

From the day of Pride's Purge, Parliament was never more than a name, a form ; but not a power, or even a reality. Parliament, in truth, had been consumed in the act of bringing the king to trial. When the House of Peers was abolished, and the Commonwealth proclaimed, the constitution was obviously at an end. In appointing the Council of State, the House of Commons (or rather the remnant of it which still sat) formally transferred the functions it had wielded for more than eight years to a council which was really a joint-committee of itself and the army. Such a committee was a necessity ; but it obviously rested on a revolutionary basis. It consisted of men prepared for a revolutionary and not a constitutional settlement. And amongst such men Cromwell was plainly supreme.

Thus, from the day when the king's head fell at Whitehall until the day of his own death there, nearly ten years later, Oliver Cromwell was the acknowledged master of England.

It is in vain to repeat that the execution of the king was a mere act of vengeance, a blunder which substituted a young and popular prince for his deposed father. However it be judged, it was at once the symbol and the cause of a profound revolution. The instinct of the army from the first fastened on it as the only guarantee that their work should be a permanent revolution and not a passing insurrection; and slowly the judgment of Cromwell was forced to adopt it in that sense. The sentence upon Charles was the end of the Feudal Monarchy and of all its attributes. It also virtually set aside at once Constitution and Parliament. It compelled the nation to look for a new settlement under new men. Above all, it made a personal ruler the great necessity of the hour. The king being dead, the throne itself destroyed, and the three Estates of the Realm suppressed, a dictator became inevitable. And there was but one possible dictator.

In the formation of the Council of State, in the compromise by which Republicans, like Vane and Fairfax, opposed to regicide were reconciled to take their place in it, in the careful reorganisation of the whole administrative and legal service, the directing spirit of Cromwell is traceable, though, after the first sittings, he had no official supremacy. The House, indeed, rejected Ireton and Harrison from the council, either as Cromwell's men or as too violent revolutionists. In the words of Capel to Cromwell before the king's death, he was the figure

which gave its denomination to the cyphers that followed. The organisation of government through the Council of State, the execution of the Duke of Hamilton and the other Royalist prisoners, the rigorous enforcement of the Republican style, were all measures which had Cromwell's support, if they were not due to his influence.

The condition of England without was, however, for the moment more pressing even than her condition within. The new Republic was not recognised by foreign sovereigns. Its enemies were upheld, and its agents were insulted throughout Europe. The bond that had held together the three kingdoms was dissolved. Scotland proclaimed Prince Charles as king. The contending factions in Ireland were at last united by the execution of Charles; Rupert was there with a fleet; and except for a few hard-pressed garrisons, Ireland was now an independent and hostile country.

The reconquest of Ireland was by all felt to be the most urgent interest of the young Commonwealth; there was almost as much agreement to entrust Cromwell with the task; and after some consideration, and prayerful consultations in the army, he accepted the duty. The condition of England was precarious indeed; service in Ireland was not popular in the army; and an ambitious adventurer would have been loath to quit England whilst the first place was still unoccupied. It was at great risk to the cause, and at much personal sacrifice, that Cromwell accepted the difficult post in Ireland as his first duty to his country and to religion. His campaign and the subsequent settlement in Ireland are amongst those things which weigh heaviest on Cromwell's memory, and which of his stoutest admirers one

only has heartily approved. Fortunately, there is no part of his policy where his conduct is more simple and his motives are more plain. The Irish policy of Cromwell was the traditional policy of all Englishmen of his creed and party, and was distinguished from theirs only by his personal vigour and thoroughness. He was neither better nor worse than the English Puritans, or rather all English statesmen for many generations: he was only keener and stronger. When he, with Vane, Fairfax, Whitelocke, and other commissioners, went to the Guildhall to obtain a loan for the campaign, they told the Common Council that this was a struggle not between Independent and Presbyterian, but between Papist and Protestant; that Papacy or Popery were not to be endured in that kingdom; and they cited the maxim of James I.: "Plant Ireland with Puritans, root out Papists, and then secure it."

To Cromwell, as to all English Puritans, it seemed a self-evident truth that one of the three realms could not be suffered to become Catholic; as little could it be suffered to become independent, or the open practice of the Catholic religion allowed there, any more than in England; finally, that peace and prosperity could never be secured in Ireland without a dominant and preponderating order of English birth and Protestant belief. By Cromwell, as by the whole Puritan body—we may fairly say by the whole body of Protestants—the Irish Rebellion of 1641 was believed to have opened with a barbarous, treacherous, and wholesale massacre, followed during nine years by one prolonged scene of confusion and bloodshed, ending in an almost complete extinction of the Protestant faith and English interests. The

victorious party, and Cromwell more deeply than others, entered on the recovery of Ireland in the spirit of a religious war, to restore to the Protestant cause one of the three realms, which had revolted to the powers of darkness. Such was for centuries the spirit of Protestant England.

The preparations for the reconquest of Ireland were all taken on a large and careful scale. But a pressing danger had first to be dealt with. The individualist doctrines of Independency and the prayer-meetings of the army had led to their natural issue—an outburst of democratic fanaticism; and democratic fanaticism in the army could only end in mutiny. It would have been difficult for Cromwell to reconcile in theory his own teaching in the troopers' prayer-meetings with rigid discipline, and with unfaltering submission to the authority of the council. But Cromwell was never at any time troubled with the need of making his theories consistent. "I tell you, sir," he said in the council about the Levellers, "you have no other way to deal with these men but to break them to pieces, or they will break us." He instinctively felt that a general mutiny in the army was ruin to his cause.

His own action was a model of swiftness, energy, and severity, mixed with moderation, and even sympathy. In the three chief outbursts—in the city, in Hyde Park, in Oxfordshire—he is the same man. By lightning rapidity of movement, by instant decision of purpose, by terrible sternness in punishing, with complete control of temper, with inflexible hold on the paramount authority of general and Parliament—in turn he orders, harangues, argues, preaches, and implores, appealing at once to the soldiers' sense of discipline, their

religion, their patriotism, and their fear of the Provost-Marshal. In the end, he convinces the heart rather than overawes the spirit. The famous scene in the churchyard at Burford is one of the most impressive and dramatic of the whole war: the ringleaders are drawn out for execution; three are shot, then the slaughter is stayed, the Lieutenant-General rises in the pulpit, and pours out such a homily, that with tears and groans the mutinous troopers return to duty. In suppressing mutiny, Cromwell is always at his best, and reminds us of Cæsar or Germanicus with the legionaries. And in this great crisis—one of the most dangerous that the Commonwealth passed—but four lives were taken by the Provost-Marshal.

Five months were occupied in the preparations for this distant and difficult campaign. Cromwell's nomination was on the 15th of March. On the same day Milton was appointed Latin Secretary to the Council. During April Cromwell arranged the marriage of his eldest son with the daughter of a very quiet, unambitious squire. On the 10th of July he set forth from London with much military state. His lifeguard was a body of gentlemen "as is hardly to be paralleled in the world." He still waited a month in the west, his wife and family around him; and thence wrote his beautiful letter to Mayor about his son, and the letter to "my beloved daughter Dorothy Cromwell, at Hursley." At length all was ready, and he set sail on the 13th of August, with 9000 men in about 100 ships. He was invested with supreme civil, as well as military, command in Ireland; amply supplied with material, and a fleet. Ireton, his son-in-law, was his second in command.

On landing in Dublin, the general made a speech to the people, in which he spoke of his purpose as "the great work against the barbarous and bloodthirsty Irish, and all their adherents and confederates, for the propagating of the Gospel of Christ, the establishing of truth and peace, and restoring that bleeding nation to its former happiness and tranquillity." His first act was to remodel the Irish army, making "a huge purge of the army which we found here: it was an army made up of dissolute and debauched men"; and the general issued a proclamation against swearing and drunkenness, and another against the "wickedness" that had been taken by the soldiery "to abuse, rob, and pillage, and too often to execute cruelties upon the country people," promising to protect all peaceable inhabitants, and to pay them in ready money for all goods. Two soldiers were shortly hanged for disobeying these orders. Having made a general muster of his forces in Dublin, and formed a complete body of 15,000 horse and foot, he selected a force of 10,000 stout, resolute men, and advanced on Drogheda (in English, Tredagh). Drogheda is a seaport town on the Boyne, about twenty-three miles due north of Dublin. It was strongly fortified, and Ormond, as Clarendon tells us, had put into it "the flower of his army, both of soldiers and officers, *most of them English*, to the number of 3000 foot, and two or three good troops of horse, provided with all things." Sir Arthur Ashton, an English Catholic, an officer "of great name and experience, and who at that time made little doubt of defending it against all the power of Cromwell," was in chief command.

Cromwell's horse reached Drogheda on 3d Sep-

tember, his memorable day ; some skirmishes followed, and on the 10th the batteries opened in earnest, after formal summons to the garrison to surrender. A steeple and a tower were beaten down the first day ; all through the 11th the batteries continued, and at length effected "two reasonable breaches." About five in the evening of the second day the storm began. "After some hot dispute we entered, about seven or eight hundred men; the enemy disputing it very stiffly with us." But a tremendous rally of the garrison—wherein Colonel Castle and other officers were killed—drove out the column, which retreated disheartened and baffled. Then the general did that which as commander he was seldom wont to do, and which he passes in silence in his despatches. "Resolved," says Ludlow, "to put all upon it, he went down to the breach ; and calling out a fresh reserve of Colonel Ewer's men, he put himself at their head, and with the word 'our Lord God,' led them up again with courage and resolution, though they met with a hot dispute." Thus encouraged to recover their loss, they got ground of the enemy, forced him to quit his entrenchments, and poured into the town. There many retreated to the Millmount, a place very strong and difficult of access ; "exceedingly high and strongly palisadoed." This place commanded the whole town : thither Sir Arthur Ashton and other important officers had betaken themselves. But the storming party burst in, and were ordered by Cromwell to put them all to the sword. The rest of the garrison fled over the bridge to the northern side of the town ; but the Ironsides followed them hotly, both horse and foot, and drove them into St. Peter's Church and the towers

of the ramparts. St. Peter's Church was set on fire by Cromwell's order. He writes to the speaker: "Indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the Town: and I think that night they put to the sword about 2000 men." Next day the other towers were summoned, and the work of slaughter was renewed for two days, until the entire garrison was annihilated. It was unquestionably a massacre. "That night they put to the sword about 2000 men." In Peter's Church "near 1000 of them were put to the sword, fleeing thither for safety." "Their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously." "I do not think we lost 100 men upon the place." Such are passages from Cromwell's own despatches.

The slaughter was indeed prodigious. The general writes: "I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. I do not think Thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives." "The enemy were about 3000 strong in the town." "I do not believe, neither do I hear, that any officer escaped with his life, save only one Lieutenant." He subsequently gives a detailed list of the slain, amounting to about 3000. Hugh Peters, the chaplain, reports as follows: "Sir, the truth is, Drogheda is taken, 3552 of the enemy slain, and 64 of ours. Ashton, the governor, killed, none spared." It is also certain that quarter was refused. "I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town." It is expressly told us that all officers and all priests taken were killed. From the days of Clarendon it has been repeated by historians that men, women, and children were indiscriminately slaughtered, and there is evidence of an eye-witness to

that effect ; but this is not believed to have been done by the order or even with the knowledge of the general. The Royalist accounts insist that quarter was promised at first ; and that the butchery of men in cold blood was carried on for days. Here again the act must have been exceptional and without authority. [See Appendix C.]

To Cromwell himself this fearful slaughter was a signal triumph of the truth. "It hath pleased God to bless our endeavours." "This hath been a marvellous great mercy." "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbued their hands in so much innocent blood ; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future. Which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret." "It was set upon some of our hearts, That a great thing should be done, not by power or might, but by the Spirit of God." In the same sense it was received by Parliament and Council of State, by some of the noblest spirits of their age. Ludlow says simply that this "extraordinary severity was used to discourage others from making opposition." It had always been the policy of Cromwell in battle to inflict a crushing defeat ; at Marston, at Naseby, and at Preston he had "taken execution of the enemy" for hours and over miles of country. At Basing and elsewhere, after a summons and a storm, he had slaughtered hundreds without mercy. And such was the law of war in that age, practised on both sides without hesitation. But the item of numbers and of time tells very heavily here. The killing of hundreds in hot blood differs from the massacre of thousands during days. There was no

such act in the whole Civil War as the massacre—prolonged for days—of 3000 men enclosed in walls entirely at the mercy of their captors, to say nothing of the promiscuous slaughter of priests, if not of women and unarmed men. In England such a deed could not have been done; and not in Ireland, but that they were Catholics fighting in defence of their faith. The fact that the garrison were Catholics, fighting on Irish soil, placed them, to the Puritan Englishman, out of the pale. No admiration for Cromwell, for his genius, courage, and earnestness—no sympathy with the cause that he upheld in England—can blind us to the truth, that the lurid light of this great crime burns still after centuries across the history of England and of Ireland; that it is one of those damning charges which the Puritan theology has yet to answer at the bar of humanity.

The tremendous blow at Drogheda struck terror into Ormond's forces. Dundalk and Trim were abandoned in haste. O'Neil swore a great oath that as Cromwell had stormed Drogheda, if he should storm hell he should take it. One fort after another yielded; and in a fortnight from the taking of Drogheda, Cromwell was master of the country north of Dublin. Marching from Dublin south, on the 23d of September, his army took forts in Wicklow, Arklow, and Enniscorthy; and on the 1st of October the general encamped before Wexford, an important seaport at the south-eastern corner of the island. The town was strong, with a rampart 15 feet thick, a garrison of over 2000 men, 100 cannon, and in the harbour two ships armed with 54 guns. Cromwell summoned the governor to surrender, not obscurely threatening him with the fate of Drogheda.

“It will clearly appear,” he said, “where the guilt will lie, if innocent persons should come to suffer with the nocent.” His terms were quarter and prison to the officers, quarter and freedom to the soldiers, protection from plunder to the town. These terms were refused, and both sides continued the fight. Suddenly, some breaches being made in the castle, the captain surrendered it, and by a surprise the whole army of the Commonwealth poured into the town. The townsmen took part in the defence; and townsmen and garrison together were forced into the market-place. There, as at Drogheda, a promiscuous massacre ensued. Upwards of 2000 were slain, and with them not a few of the citizens; and the town was delivered over to pillage. It is asserted by the Catholic writers that a body of women, who had taken refuge round the cross, were deliberately slaughtered, and that a general massacre took place without regard to sex or age. Priests were killed at once, and in the sack and pillage, undoubtedly some non-combatants, it may be some women and children. But these things were incidents of such a storm, and were not done by design or order of the general. This is his own story:—

“Whilst I was preparing of it; studying to preserve the Town from plunder, that it might be of the more use to you and your Army,—the Captain, who was one of the Commissioners, being fairly treated, yielded up the Castle to us. Upon the top of which our men no sooner appeared, but the Enemy quitted the Walls of the Town; which our men perceiving, ran violently upon the Town with their ladders, and stormed it. And when they were come into the market-place, the Enemy making a stiff resistance, our forces brake them; and then put all to the sword that came in their way.

Two boatfuls of the Enemy attempting to escape, being overprest with numbers, sank ; whereby were drowned near three-hundred of them. I believe, in all, there was lost of the Enemy not many less than Two-thousand ; and I believe not Twenty of yours from first to last of the Siege. And indeed it hath, not without cause, been deeply set upon our hearts, That, we intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the Town might be of more use to you and your Army, yet God would not have it so ; but by an unexpected providence, in His righteous justice, brought a just judgment upon them ; causing them to become a prey to the Soldier—who in their piracies had made preys of so many families, and now with their bloods to answer the cruelties which they have exercised upon the lives of divers poor Protestants ! . . .

“ This Town is now so in your power, that of the former inhabitants, I believe scarce one in twenty can challenge any property in their houses. Most of them are run away, and many of them killed in this service. And it were to be wished that an honest people would come and plant here.”

The blow that had desolated Drogheda and Wexford did not need to be repeated. Ross was taken ; the Munster garrisons—Cork, Kinsale, and others—joined the Commonwealth. And within three months of Cromwell's march from Dublin, the whole of the towns on the eastern and southern sides of Ireland, except Waterford and some others, were reduced to the Parliament. Waterford resisted him ; a wet winter set in ; and with the wet, dysentery and fever. Cromwell fell ill ; many officers sickened ; General Jones died. “ What England lost hereby is above me to speak,” wrote the general. “ I am sure I lost a noble friend and companion in labours. You see how God mingles out the cup to us. Indeed we are at this time a crazy company : yet we live in His sight ; and shall work the time that is appointed us, and shall rest after that in peace.”

After a short rest, on the 29th of January, Cromwell was again in the field. He passed into the heart of the island—into Kilkenny and Tipperary; Clogheen, Castletown, Fethard, Callan, Cashel, Cahir, Kilkenny, Carrick, were taken after a short defence; and Clonmel at last surrendered after a desperate attempt at storm, which cost Cromwell, it is said, 2000 men. This was his last great fight in Ireland. He had now crushed opposition in the whole east and south of the island; the north had returned to the Protestant cause; Waterford fell soon after; and except Limerick, Galway, and a few fortresses, the Parliament's forces were masters of the island. Cromwell had been nine months in Ireland, and at no time possessed an army of more than 15,000 men. Within that time he had taken a score of strong places, and in a series of bloody encounters had dispersed or annihilated armies of far greater number than his own. An official summons to England had been sent in January; it was not till the end of May that he actually obeyed it.

As Cromwell's practice in warfare in Ireland differed somewhat from what he observed elsewhere, and as from that day to this it has been the subject of furious invective, a few words thereon are plainly needed. Cromwell had gone to Ireland, at imminent risk to his cause, to recover it to the Parliament in the shortest possible time, and with a relatively small army. He had gone there first to punish (as was believed) a wholesale massacre and a social revolution, to restore the Irish soil to England, and to replace the Protestant ascendancy. In the view of the Commonwealth government, the mass was by law a crime, Catholic priests were

legally outlaws, and all who resisted the Parliament were constructively guilty of murder and rebellion. Such were the accepted axioms of the whole Puritan party, and of Cromwell as much as any man.

In such a war he held that where a place was stormed after summons, all in arms might justly be put to the sword, though no longer capable of resistance, and though they amounted to thousands. "They," he writes, "refusing conditions seasonably offered, were all put to the sword." Repeatedly he shot all officers who surrendered at discretion. Officers who had once served the Parliament he hanged. Priests, taken alive, were hanged. "As for your clergymen, as you call them," wrote Oliver to the Governor of Kilkenny, "in case you agree for a surrender, they shall march away safely; but if they fall otherwise into my hands, I believe they know what to expect from me." At Gowran the castle surrendered. "The next day, the Colonel, the Major, and the rest of the Commission officers were shot to death: . . . In the same castle also he took a Popish Priest, who was chaplain to the Catholics in this regiment; who was caused to be hanged." The Bishop of Ross, marching to save Clonmel with 5000 men, was defeated by Broghill, captured, and hanged in sight of his own men. The Bishop of Clogher was routed by Coote and Venables and shared the same fate. "All their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously," Cromwell wrote at Drogheda, as the Catholic martyrologies assert with torture. Peaceable inhabitants were not to be molested. But all who had taken part in or supported the rebellion of 1641 were liable to justice.

For soldiers he found a new career. By a stroke of

profound policy he encouraged foreign embassies to enlist Irish volunteers, giving them a free pass abroad. And thus it is said some 40,000 Irishmen ultimately passed into the service of foreign sovereigns. With great energy and skill the Lord-Lieutenant set about the reorganisation of government in Ireland. A leading feature of this was the Cromwellian settlement afterwards carried out under the Protectorate, by which immense tracts of land in the provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster were allotted to English settlers, and the landowners of Irish birth removed into Connaught.

Cromwell has left on record his own principles of action in the famous Declaration which he issued in January in reply to the Irish bishops:—

Ireland, he says, was once united to England. Englishmen had inheritances and leases which they had purchased: and they lived peaceably. “You broke this Union. You, unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard-of and most barbarous massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the sun beheld.” It is a fig-leaf of pretence, that they fight for their king: really it is for men guilty of blood:—*bellum prelatium et religiosum*—as you say. “You are a part of Anti-Christ, whose kingdom the Scripture so expressly speaks should be laid in blood, yea in the blood of the saints.” “You quote my own words at Ross,” he says, “that where the Parliament of England have power, the exercise of the mass will not be allowed of; and you say that this is a design to extirpate the Catholic religion. I cannot extirpate what has never been rooted. These are my intentions. I shall not, where I have power, suffer the exercise of the mass. Nor shall I suffer any Papists, where I find them seducing the people, or by overt act violating the laws.” “As for the people, what thoughts they have in matters of religion in their own breasts I cannot reach.” But as to the charge of massacre, destruction, or banishment he says: “*Give us an*

instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms, massacred, destroyed or banished ; concerning the massacre or the destruction of whom justice hath not been done, or endeavoured to be done."

This very pointed and daring challenge could hardly have been publicly made by such a man as Cromwell, if, to his knowledge, a slaughter of women and unarmed men had occurred. On the other hand, it is certain that priests and others had been killed in cold blood ; and a general who delivers over a city to pillage, and forbids quarter, can hardly say where outrage and massacre will cease. As to banishment, the "Cromwellian settlement" was necessarily based on the banishment of those whom the settlers displaced.

With regard to the policy of confiscation and resettlement, Cromwell warmly justifies it. It is the just way of meeting rebellion, he says. You have forfeited your estates, and it is just to raise money by escheating your lands. But apart from the land forfeited, which is but a part of the account, if ever men were engaged in a just and righteous cause it was this, he asserts : —

"We are come to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed ; and to endeavour to bring to an account, — by the presence and blessing of the Almighty, in whom alone is our hope and strength, — all who, by appearing in arms, seek to justify the same. We come to break the power of lawless Rebels, who having cast off the Authority of England, live as enemies to Human Society ; whose principles, the world hath experience, are, To destroy and subjugate all men not complying with them. We come, by the assistance of God, to hold forth and maintain the lustre and glory of English Liberty in a Nation where we have an undoubted right to do it ; — wherein the people of Ireland (if they listen not to such seducers as you are) may equally participate in

all benefits ; to use liberty and fortune equally with Englishmen, if they keep out of arms."

Such was the basis of the famous "Cromwellian settlement"—by far the most thorough act in the long history of the conquest of Ireland ; by far the most wholesale effort to impose on Ireland the Protestant faith and English ascendancy. Wholesale and thorough, but not enough for its purpose. It failed like all the others ; did more, perhaps, than any other to bind Ireland to the Catholic Church, and to alienate Irishmen from the English rule. On the Irish race it has left undying memories and a legend of tyranny which is summed up in the peasants' saying of the *Curse of Cromwell*.

Cromwell, not worse than the Puritans and English of his age, but nobler and more just, must yet for generations to come bear the weight of the legendary "curse." He was the incarnation of Puritan passion, the instrument of English ambition ; the official authority by whom the whole work was carried out, the one man ultimately responsible for the rest ; and it is thus that on him lies chiefly the weight of this secular national quarrel.

Oliver, leaving Ireland to his son-in-law Ireton, and appointing civil and military chiefs, reached London on the 31st of May. Here he was received with a salute of big guns, honours, and acclamations ; Fairfax, members of Parliament, and a great multitude coming out to welcome him. The Cockpit was appointed as his residence ; the city of London, Parliament, and many persons of quality offered their congratulations "on the safe arrival of his Excellence after so many dangers

both by sea and land, wherein God had preserved him, and the wonderful successes which He had given him." As he passed Tyburn in his thronged procession, one said to him, "See what a multitude of people come to attend your triumph!" He answered with a smile and very unconcerned, "*More would come to see me hanged!*"

APPENDIX C

No part of the history of these times is more beset with contradictory accounts than the details of the Irish war. Race hatred and sectarian mendacity have carried contradiction to the extreme limit. Was the garrison of Drogheda English or Irish; was there a promiscuous massacre there of citizens and women? On these two points there is deliberate contradiction.

As to the garrison, Clarendon says, "most of them English." In another place he speaks of the "massacre of that body of English at Tredagh." So also say Ludlow and Bates. Whitelocke says, "mostly Irish." Ormond says they were chiefly Catholics; and the Irish writers interpret this to mean Irish. Cromwell's despatch at Drogheda ends thus: "2500 Foot-soldiers besides Staff-officers, Surgeons, etc." This appears in the *Parliamentary History* with the added words, "*and many inhabitants,*" and has been so copied into many histories.

The letter from Clonmel in *Cromwelliana* (10th May 1650) runs thus: "We discovered the enemy to be gone, and very early this morning pursued them, and fell upon their reare of straglers, and killed above 200, *besides those we slew in the storm.*" S. Dillingham, writing to Sancroft from Gutter Lane (May 1650), evidently reporting this news, relates it thus: "They were mad when they came in, and sending to pursue, *cut off two hundred women and children!*" (Cary, ii. 218). The Rev. Denis Murphy, S.J., in his *Cromwell in Ireland* cites this passage, but alters "they paid dear" into "we paid dear," as if from an eye-witness.

Parliament voted "that the House doth approve the execution done at Drogheda, as an act both of justice to them and mercy to others who may be warned by it; and that the Council of State prepare a letter to be signed by the Speaker." Ludlow, Fairfax, Col. Hutchinson, Vane, White-locke, were members of the Council of State; Milton was its Secretary; Fairfax was Commander-in-Chief. Milton writes in his panegyric (*Defensio Secunda*): "*Tu, uno statim prælio Hibernicorum opes fregisti.*" Lucy Hutchinson calmly mentions "how Cromwell finished the conquest of Ireland," and seems to see in it only the hand of God.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAMPAIGN IN SCOTLAND—WORCESTER

A.D. 1650-1651. *ÆTAT.* 51-52

WAR between England and Scotland had long been imminent. When Cromwell returned from Ireland it became his immediate task. In June Charles landed in Scotland, and was proclaimed there king of the three kingdoms. The Kirk party which had defeated Montrose determined to support the Stuart on his taking the Covenant. They collected an army on the border, and inflamed the Scotch people against the Commonwealth. Underneath the ancient national quarrel lay the yet deeper quarrel of religion. The dominant party in Scotland were fanatical partisans of the most rigid form of Presbyterian orthodoxy. The chiefs of the English Commonwealth, who had suppressed Presbyterianism and monarchy together, were no less resolute to found a Bible freedom of Independency.

It is now useless to discuss whether the Scotch had given just cause for war; whether war between the two countries could be avoided by wisdom and moderation. Fairfax doubted if it were just, and the famous deputation which Cromwell headed failed to shake him. We officers, said the Lord-Lieutenant, desire to serve under

no other general. The Scotch have invaded us once, and give good cause to think they intend another invasion. War between us is unavoidable. Is it better to have this war in the bowels of another country or in our own? Cromwell was certainly in earnest; but no arguments could shake Fairfax; he resigned his commission, and never again took part in public affairs. The next day Cromwell was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces raised and to be raised by authority of Parliament. Three days later he set out for the north, where an army of some 16,000 men had for some time been mustering.

The sudden advance of Cromwell, fresh from the bloody campaign in Ireland, struck dismay into the Scotch border. The preachers inveighed against him as a blasphemer, leading an army of plunderers and murderers. The country was laid bare and the male inhabitants withdrawn from the border up to Edinburgh. David Lesley, Cromwell's old comrade at Marston, a thorough soldier, trained in the wars of Gustavus, was put in command; his plan of campaign was to wear out the invader by avoiding battle, and cutting off his supplies. The English general crossed the border on 22d July, and advanced somewhat slowly along the coast, resting on his ships. The sternest discipline was enforced. Then began a long and characteristic duel of manifestoes and declarations, issued by the chiefs and preachers in each army. Both sides, with abundant quotations from Scripture, insisted that God was on their side. The Scotch maintained that the Commonwealth had broken the Covenant. The Cromwellians retorted that the Scotch Presbyterians were laying the seeds of perpetual

war by taking their grand enemy to their bosoms, and by engaging to restore him to his throne in England and Ireland. It was not so much a battle between two armies, as between two rival congregations in arms. Both sides intensely believed that God was with them, and His Word gave clear assurance that all their opponents should be utterly cast down. Never was national and religious animosity more fiercely kindled amongst men who had so much in common, and who were implicitly guided by the same Book. It was a religious war between two sects, each of which regarded the other as schismatics. Thus the English army entered Scotiand consumed with zeal to fight it out to the last man in defence of the Commonwealth, and "to live and die with their renowned general."

Some indecisive actions followed, where the great superiority of the English soldiers was manifest, and especially their strength in horse. Lesley doggedly refused battle, and fell back to a line resting on the coast between Edinburgh and Leith, with some 22,000 men. All through August Cromwell strove to force Lesley to a battle; but "he lay very strong," and could not be attacked in his positions. The weather was wet and stormy; provisions were failing; sickness disabled a tenth of the men; and the situation became indeed grave. From side to side the English general attempted to cut off the Scotch from their supplies, but the whole north and north-west lay open to them; Cromwell could not advance far from his base on the coast, and the ships could not lie in the Forth.

Unable to force the enemy to battle, he again betook himself to spiritual arms, and issued those two amazing

appeals—one to the Kirk and the other to their general. As in the midst of his Irish campaign he passionately inveighed against the Irish bishops, so now, invader in arms as he was, he laboriously argued with the godly men of the Kirk as with brothers in the Lord. “I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.” Are you sure, he argues, that this your league with wicked and carnal men is a covenant of God? “I pray you read the twenty-eighth of Isaiah, from the fifth to the fifteenth verse. And do not scorn to know that it is the Spirit that quickens and giveth life.” And to General Lesley he writes: “That under pretence of the Covenant, a king should be taken in by you, to be imposed upon us”—a king who now has a Popish army fighting for and under him in Ireland, and who is surrounded by Malignants fighting and plotting for him in England and elsewhere. It does not appear that either side designed these declarations for their own men more than the enemy. Both profoundly believed their own cause; and if they did not think they could persuade the other, they could not understand how godly men could resist truth so plain and Scriptural.

Twice had Cromwell advanced upon the enemy, and twice he had retired baffled. His men were weary with marching, exhausted by the wet and storms, ill-fed, and reduced by disease, when, sullenly fighting, they fell back on Dunbar, 1st September. By a very skilful manœuvre Lesley passed his whole army round the retreating invader, planted himself to the south of him securely on the Lammermuir Hills, and occupied with a strong guard the pass which was the key of the road to

England. Cromwell's position was now very critical. He had scarcely 11,000 men left under arms : and these, as one of them wrote, "a poor, scattered, hungry, discouraged army." The enemy, just double his number, was placed on a strong range of hills between him and his own country, and had occupied the only road by the sea along which he could retreat across the border. His whole force lay on a small promontory jutting out into the Northern Sea, with no other base than his ships. He saw the danger fully ; and on the 2d of September he wrote thus privately to warn Sir Arthur Haselrig, the Governor of Newcastle :—

"We are upon an engagement very difficult. The enemy hath blocked up our way at the pass at Cockburnspath, through which we cannot get almost without a miracle. He lieth so upon the hills that we know not how to come that way without great difficulty ; and our lying here daily consumeth our men, who fall sick beyond imagination." Then he warns the governor to provide against a catastrophe, to get together what forces he can, to send to friends in the south, to inform Sir H. Vane, but not to make it public. "*Whatever becomes of us*, it will be well for you to get what forces you can together ; and the south to help what they can. The business nearly concerneth all good people." But he goes on : "All shall work for good. Our spirits are comfortable, praised be the Lord ! though our present condition be as it is."

With such foresight Oliver faced a great peril, that it might not lead to the ruin of the Commonwealth. As Harvey, one of his attendants, writes : "He was a strong man, in the dark perils of war, in the high places of the field ; hope shone in him like a pillar of fire, when it had gone out in all the others."

Cromwell's position was "very difficult," as he said,

but not desperate. He was not yet driven to embark either men or guns. A battle would give him victory ; and one mistake of the enemy would secure him his battle. That mistake at last Lesley made. Either forced by the Kirk committee and the influence of the preachers over his men, or urged on to crush the invader at one blow, he began to draw down his army towards the shore. That very afternoon, 2d September, Cromwell, walking with Lambert, noticed the change of position ; how the enemy's right wing had descended into the plain. "The Lord hath delivered them into our hand !" was the cry of Cromwell, as vague tradition relates. This he thought, if he did not utter the words ; Lambert and Monk were of the same mind, and so were other officers. That night a plan of battle was drawn up, the formations made, and leaders were chosen for each line. Lesley had drawn down his wing to the coast, hoping to surround and crush the English, in the act, as he supposed, of embarking his men. Cromwell's design was to hold the main Scotch army with his big guns, whilst he fell suddenly with his best troops on Lesley's right wing, and so to roll it back upon its centre. The night was wild and wet ; the moon covered with clouds. The English lay partly in tents ; the Scotch on the open hillside, crouched for shelter in the soaked shocks of corn. Both armies rested beside their arms, waiting eagerly for dawn ; and on both sides many gathered in companies, and prayed aloud and for the last time to the God of Battles.

At four in the morning by the light of the moon the English began to move. Two hours were spent in the sodden fields in completing their formation. Then they

advanced to the charge with the word that day: *The Lord of Hosts*. For some time the dispute was hot and stiff. The cannons roared against the main line of the Scotch army, still posted on its hill, and unable to deploy freely across the brook and ravine in their front. At first their right wing in the plain drove back the English troopers across the brook, where it opens out towards the sea. But, supported by the foot which now advanced, and aided by Cromwell's favourite resource of a flank charge of cavalry, they returned to the assault and drove back the enemy, both horse and foot. "After the first repulse," runs the general's despatch, "they were made by the Lord of Hosts as stubble to their swords." "The best of the Scotch horse being broken through and through in less than an hour's dispute, their whole army being put to confusion, it became a total rout; our men having the chase and execution of them near eight miles." The right wing of Lesley was alone the free part of his army. It had been outmatched and utterly crushed in less than an hour by Cromwell's main force. Three thousand of the Scotch were cut down in the first onset. "They run! I profess they run!" cried Oliver as he watched the charge. The main body of the Scotch being planted on a hillside, and behind a deep brook that ran in a ravine between them and the enemy, had long been pounded by Cromwell's cannon without being able to deploy. As at last they descended the hill to support their right wing, it dashed in upon them in its flight, the horsemen in panic riding down their supports. The whole army broke and dispersed, flying in all directions: some south, some north.

Just then over the eastern ocean burst the first gleam

of the sun through the morning mist. And above the roar of the battle was heard the voice of the general: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered." Then, as the whole Scotch army fled in wild confusion, "the Lord-General made a halt," steadying his men and firing them afresh for the pursuit: he sang the 117th Psalm: "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord."

Such was Dunbar battle on Cromwell's great day. The overthrow had been complete. Three thousand dead lay on the field; thousands fell in the chase; 10,000 prisoners were taken; the whole baggage and train, all the artillery, great and small; 15,000 stand of arms, 200 colours. On the part of the victors, but two officers and twenty men had fallen. It is seldom that war sees a victory so rapid, so overwhelming, and so wholly one-sided.

The Scotch were brave and hardy soldiers, adequately equipped, fired with religious enthusiasm, and twice as numerous as the English. They were at home, resting on their capital, well provisioned, and led by a very experienced soldier, who had baffled Cromwell for six weeks. But the bulk of their men were raw, unorganised levies; the great majority of the officers were without any training, and the preachers had far more authority than the officers. The Scotch host was rather a church than an army. Cromwell's army from first to last was a perfect body of warriors—generals, officers, horse, and foot; unsurpassed in courage, skill in arms, in discipline, and in *morale*. The campaign had been one to try the

best troops ; and they had never wavered before disease, hunger, or fatigue. Cromwell, if not one of the great masters of strategy, was certainly a consummate leader on the field of battle. His tactics on the day of Dunbar were as complete as those of Lesley were faulty. His men were troops never surpassed as soldiers, stirred with the energy of martyrs : they were led that day with all the insight and the swoop that mark a great commander.

It is another and more complex question whether Cromwell had shown strategic skill in the campaign. Till the day of Dunbar his campaign had been barely a success. He had no base but his ships, a doubtful resource in such a season and on such a coast ; and he made three marches, at least, exposed to singular risk. But before we can judge them to be military blunders we must remember that he was sure of himself—sure of his men. He knew that they were consummate soldiers, facing ill-trained levies. He knew that one hour of battle would decide the campaign, and he acted as so many great generals have acted when, trusting in their own star, and knowing that they led unconquered veterans against a rude militia, they have broken every rule of warfare and plucked victory out of extreme peril. So Hannibal at Cannæ, manœuvring in the plain with a smaller but trained army, had drawn down the larger host of the Romans from their hills, turned suddenly upon them, and crushed them in one awful ruin. There too, till the hour of battle, the victor seemed baffled and hemmed in ; there too the defeated army was ruined by pride, self-will, faction, and patriotic rhetoric ; and there also it was seen that a great general at the head of a veteran army can outmatch any odds ; nay, the courage

and enthusiasm of a brave people fighting for their altars and their homes.

The next day Cromwell sent on Lambert to occupy Edinburgh, himself remaining at Dunbar, much embarrassed with his prisoners. Five thousand sick or feeble men he sent away: 5000 others were despatched to England, where they died like flies. That day he wrote to his wife a few words of affection, adding that he was growing an old man, and felt the infirmities of age marvellously stealing upon him. And he found time in the midst of the campaign to write many other letters to his family and friends. Disaster had broken up the Scotch into several parties. The king, with a new army, was holding out in the Highlands, resting on Perth and Stirling. Cromwell, with his generals, occupied the country south of the Forth, and thence to the Clyde. Long exhortations and wrestlings in spirit, blasts and counter-blasts, passed between the chiefs of the two nations; unceasing efforts were made to reassure the inhabitants; and gradually the bulk of the southern population became accustomed to the firm and moderate rule of Cromwell. On the 1st of January 1651 Charles II. was crowned king at Scone; and gradually withdrawing himself from the Kirk, he gathered an army of the old Royalist type.

The winter was severe, and Cromwell failed to shake the royal army at Stirling. In one of these expeditions, early in February, the general was seized with his old enemy—ague. He had a severe attack in March 1648; others in Ireland in 1649-50; now a third in less than a year. It fell on him in three successive relapses, endangering his life, breaking his constitution, and paralyse-

ing his activity until June. "I thought I should have died of this fit of sickness," he writes to the Council of State, "but the Lord seemeth to dispose otherwise." And to his wife he writes: "In these hopes I wait, and am not without expectation of a gracious return. Pray for me. . . . Truly I am not able as yet to write much. I am weary; and rest, thine." He still, in the intervals of his sickness, marches and gives orders, argues, prays, and preaches, at least as eager to convince as to conquer his misguided Presbyterian brethren. "I shall not need," he writes to the Council, "to recite the extremity of my last sickness: it was so violent that, indeed, my nature was not able to bear the weight thereof. But the Lord was pleased to deliver me, beyond expectation; and to give me cause to say once more, 'He hath plucked me out of the grave!'" So he had written to Fairfax, in his sickness of 1648: "I received in myself the sentence of death, that I might learn to trust in Him that raiseth from the dead, and have no confidence in the flesh. It's a blessed thing to die daily."

His life was saved, but his health was visibly shaken. It was observed that he had grown an old man. And the warning was not lost on him. No portion of his career is more full than is this Scotch campaign of affectionate communings with his family and intimates, meditations on the will of God, and kindly dealing with all with whom he came into personal contact. Cromwell resumed the field in June; and after fruitless attempts to take or surround Stirling, he boldly crossed the Forth into Fife, designing to cut off the Royalist communication. A successful engagement by Lambert, where the Scotch lost 2000 men, gave him a firm hold north of the

Forth. He passed across it himself with his main force, and placed himself between Stirling and Perth—which latter surrendered after one day's siege.

The success of Cromwell in his rear, and divisions in his own followers, drove Charles to the desperate adventure with which the long struggle closed. At the end of July he suddenly broke up his camp at Stirling, and made a dash for England by way of Carlisle and the north-western counties. Such an adventure had been talked of and even expected by the Council since the beginning of the year. It was entirely in the reckless spirit of the overweening cavaliers; and Charles had long been withdrawing from the Presbyterians and the politicians to place himself in the hands of the Royalist soldiers. Cromwell heard of the march as he lay before Perth; it is plain with neither surprise nor alarm. There is every reason to believe that he deliberately opened the way for it by marching upon Perth whilst he left the south open. At least, he accepted the alternative either of driving Charles into the western Highlands, or of leaving him free to dash upon his ruin in England. And of the two Cromwell much preferred the last.

The danger was far more apparent than real. It was hardly more serious than the raid of his young kinsman to Derby a hundred years later. There were ample forces to hold and to surround Charles, and little risk of his rousing a new war in England. Cromwell left a garrison in Perth, sent Monk with 6000 men to reduce Stirling and to maintain Scotland, and himself with his main army hastened back across the border by way of Berwick—

“Resolving,” he writes, “to make what speed we can up to the enemy,—who, in his desperation and fear, and out of

inevitable necessity, is run to try what he can do this way. I do apprehend that if he goes for England, being some few days' march before us, it will trouble some men's thoughts ; and may occasion some inconveniences." He then explains that the present campaign will end the war, and avoid another winter in Scotland. "The Lord," he adds, "will make the desperateness of this counsel of theirs to appear, and the folly of it also. When England was much more unsteady than now ; and when a much more considerable army of theirs, unfoiled, invaded you ; and we had but a weak force to make resistance at Preston—upon deliberate advice, we chose rather to put ourselves between their army and Scotland : and how that succeeded is not well to be forgotten ! *This* is not out of choice on our part, but by some kind of necessity ; and it is to be hoped will have the like issue."

General Harrison, with a strong body of horse on the border, was ordered to hang on the enemy's flank. Lambert, with the main body of the cavalry, was pushed on to follow up his rear. Levies were summoned on many sides, the towns were defended by volunteers, and Cromwell's main army followed with the utmost rapidity.

Charles marched on through Cumberland and Lancashire with a jaded army, some 12,000 strong, summoning towns and calling for recruits ; but he met no response. Lord Derby raised a force to join him, but it was cut to pieces by Lilburne ; the towns resisted ; the country-people flew at his approach, driving off their cattle ; Fairfax raised his men in Yorkshire ; Colonel Hutchinson in Nottingham ; and by the time the king had reached Shropshire, Lambert and Harrison faced him with an equal body of soldiers far better than his own. The Council of State worked night and day with extraordinary energy ; county militias were everywhere mustering ; and Charles, baffled and disheartened, turned to the

south-west to Worcester. Here, towards the end of August, Cromwell arrived. He had marched from Perth in little more than three weeks, and found himself in command of more than 30,000 men. Charles was now brought to bay. His men were exhausted by their march in a hostile country, and were circled round with enemies. "We have one stout argument, despair," wrote the Duke of Hamilton; "for we must now either stoutly fight it or die." Cromwell had before him the last cavalier army, which his own troops outnumbered nearly three to one. The Civil War was about to close.

Charles held at Worcester a very strong position. The city was stoutly fortified; it lay on the left or eastern bank of the Severn, a little above the point where the Teme flows into it from the west. A strong fort on a steep hill in advance of the walls defended the city on its south-eastern angle, and a bridge connected it with a suburb on the right, or western, bank of the Severn. Charles posted his main force in the triangle formed by the two rivers, using the city and its outworks as a powerful *tête-de-pont*, or entrenched camp, whence, behind strong walls and on the inner line, his troops could quickly operate, now on the right, now on the left side of the Severn. He broke up the bridge over the Severn at Upton lower down, and occupied in force the bridge over the Teme. There, *à-cheval* on two rivers, and in the triangle between them, the Royalist army stood at bay.

Cromwell appeared before Worcester on the 28th of August. Having an overwhelming force, he was able to divide his army in two sections, and to attack on both sides of the Severn with two forces, each outnumbering

the enemy. He himself fortified the hill on the eastern side of the river, and from his batteries cannonaded the city. Fleetwood was despatched down the Severn, which, with great spirit, he crossed on the broken bridge, wounded Massey, the Royalist general, drove back the Scotch on to the Teme, and planted himself firmly on the western bank of the Severn. From the 28th of August till 3d of September the batteries played on the city, the works drawing closer round it, and the besieged continually giving ground. At dawn on the 3d of September—his fortunate day—Cromwell ordered his final assault. "This day twelvemonth," runs a despatch, "was glorious at Dunbar, this day hath been glorious at Worcester. The word then was '*The Lord of Hosts*,' and so it was now; and indeed the Lord of Hosts was wonderfully with us."

Fleetwood began the day with assailing the Scots on the Teme, Cromwell aiding with a force from the other bank, and between them they succeeded in building two bridges of boats close together; one across Severn, the other across Teme. The triangle thus lost its two river defences. Fleetwood poured into it across the Teme from Upton, and Cromwell, heading the van in person, poured into it across the Severn. The Scotch were driven back from one defence to another, fighting desperately; but they had been taken in flank, and were completely overpowered by the forces converging upon them from both armies. The king, who watched the fight from the tower of the Cathedral, hastily withdrew his men across Severn bridge into the city; and at once commenced a skilful and vigorous manœuvre. It was now afternoon: the city was still unbroken, and

a large part of the Royalist army was safe behind its walls. Suddenly dashing out from the south-eastern gates upon the remnant of Cromwell's army left on the left bank of the Severn, Charles, at the head of his cavalry, broke a regiment of foot and began to force back the weakened wing. Oliver, instantly perceiving the change of battle, galloped over the bridge of boats back to the troops he had left, passed over again his foot and horse, and fell upon the royal forces. These were quickly driven in, fighting desperately from point to point into the now closing shades of evening. Fort Royal, disdain- ing to yield to Cromwell's summons, was stormed, and all within it put to the sword. By eight o'clock the city gates were forced, and pell-mell the flying and the pursuers burst into the crowded streets. There a fearful carnage ensued. Fighting went on from street to street far into the night; and the city was delivered over to pillage. The overthrow was complete. Three thousand dead Scots lay on the field: 10,000 prisoners were taken. The remnant of the fugitives were cut down in the retreat; Hamilton, Derby, Massey, Lauderdale, Lesley, and all the leaders were taken prisoners. "My Lord-General did exceedingly hazard himself, riding up and down in the midst of the fire." It was "as stiff a contest for four or five hours as ever I have seen." The loss of the victors was under 200 men. "The dimensions of this mercy," wrote Cromwell to the Speaker, "are above my thoughts. It is, for aught I know, a crowning mercy." And then he breaks forth in the very hour of victory, as at Dunbar, as at Drogheda, as at Naseby, to impress on Parliament the great lessons which this mercy appeared to him to teach.

Cromwell was right. The Royalist cause was utterly crushed out at Worcester. He never again appeared in the field; and during his lifetime the sword was not drawn again in England.

In many respects this last campaign differs much from all that went before it. In the month that elapsed, from 3d August to the 3d of September, the army that fought at Dunbar had marched 300 miles. New armies had been mustered in many counties, equipped, supplied, and made to converge by a common plan, had first controlled the Royalist invaders and then had hemmed them in, as in a circle of iron. Not a single scheme miscarried; and from the hour that Charles crossed the border he had never had a chance. And so too the battle of Worcester was far more complex than any which Cromwell had hitherto fought. The operations in which it culminated were carried on continuously for a whole week. The simultaneous attack on both sides of the city, and the advance along both sides of two rivers, was a very complex manœuvre. To build two bridges of boats in mid-battle, to pass an army twice across a rapid river in the same engagement and within a few hours, is a bold and difficult achievement. It demanded in the troops an alertness and precision of discipline; in their officers experience and skill; and in their commander a consummate mastery of his resources and confidence in his men. It was fully justified by success. Not a single combination broke down. And this singular and complex battle would alone suffice to place the name of Cromwell high in the rank of tacticians, unless we judge his own impetuous courage to savour too much of the general of division.

Here Cromwell, at the age of fifty-two, sheathed the sword which he had girt on at the age of forty-three. To judge by the test of success, few generals have ever done more. Not only did he never command in any battle that did not result in utter ruin to his enemy, but no single operation of war that he ever undertook had failed. With some 15,000 men he practically reconquered Ireland in nine months; with a little larger force he subdued Scotland in about a year. At Marston and at Naseby he had converted a losing battle into an overwhelming victory. At Basing, at Drogheda, at Worcester, he stormed strong places, desperately defended, in a few hours of fighting and with very moderate loss. At Preston, with a loss of 50 men, he annihilated a brave army of 24,000 men; at Dunbar, with a smaller loss, he annihilated another brave army of 22,000; at Worcester, with a loss of under 200, he overwhelmed an army of 15,000 men. He never fared so well, he said, as when the enemy were two to one. Except at Worcester, he always fought against great odds. Every one of his victories was won in the least time and with the smallest loss. It is true that he was never opposed to an army at all equal in discipline to his own. But then the discipline, the *morale*, the organisation were all his work. He had created a regular army, and had trained it to become as perfect an instrument of war as history records. And thus, if we judge by results and the standard of his age, Oliver Cromwell stands out as thoroughly successful in strategy and as a general in the field such as our history records but one or two.

CHAPTER X

THE UNOFFICIAL DICTATORSHIP

A.D. 1651-1653. *ÆTAT.* 52-54

As the Second Civil War, leading up to the death of the king, had left Cromwell the foremost man in the nation in all but style and office, so he returned from the conquest of Ireland and Scotland, and the final overthrow of the royal cause at Worcester, invested with an undefined but semi-official dictatorship.

Parliament received the news of the victory with a spasm of relief and unbounded enthusiasm, and made the return of the Lord-General one long triumphal progress. A deputation from the House met him at Aylesbury; from Acton, the Speaker, the Lord Mayor, sheriffs, and a great assemblage of members and civic officials, conducted him in state to London with coaches, body-guard, salvoes of artillery, and shouts of the crowd. He received the thanks of the House, an additional grant of £4000 a year, and the use of Hampton Court as a residence. Thereby he was recognised by what remained of legal authority as practically dictator.

He was now at the height of his power and prestige; and even Hugh Peters thought that he would make himself king. This, then, was the moment when a

Bonaparte would have seized the vacant throne. Cromwell made no such use of the immense ascendancy which Drogheda, Dunbar, and Worcester had added to the office of Commander-in-Chief. It was remarked that he carried himself with affability and modesty, and he betook himself to work as a simple member of the Council. There he laboured assiduously for nineteen months ; nor on any single occasion did he bring himself conspicuously before the nation. His biographers have found it hard to ascertain how, during this period, his energies were employed. The history of his work is to be sought for in the records of the Council of State, and its manifold commissions and departments. He served on the standing committees of the Ordnance, of the Admiralty, of Trade and Foreign affairs, of Law, of the affairs of Ireland and Scotland, of the Dutch question, beside many other subsidiary committees for special matters. Of the army he was already the chief by Act of Parliament. Thus legally in control of the whole military forces, with paramount voice in the civil service, at once Captain-General and semi-official dictator, Oliver worked on at the administrative business of the nation. But he worked without display, accepting the shadowy authority of the remnant or fag-end of the Long Parliament. It was only after an anxious interval of abortive attempts at a settled government that he began to take independent action.

Nineteen months elapsed after Worcester fight before he closed the Long Parliament: it was two years and three months before he was named Protector.

The situation was that which inevitably succeeds a violent and successful revolution. The whole fabric of

the body politic and social, had been shaken to its roots; the peril which had given the Commonwealth its cohesion and mighty force was at an end; and the various elements of which that force was composed were now free to insist on their differences. We may assume that the majority of the nation did not desire a permanent Commonwealth; that the Royalist party represented ideas and institutions to which Englishmen were destined to cling for generations, and even for centuries to come. On the other hand, the Commonwealth party, by their convictions, character, and organisation, by their superior weight of every sort, possessed an enormous predominance in effective strength.

The backbone of that Commonwealth party was the army—an army which consisted not of mercenaries or conscripts, but which was the flower of the people; men who were, and knew themselves to be, the natural leaders of their countrymen. They were at once an army made up of trained politicians, and a party made up of unconquered veterans. Rarely, indeed, in history has moral and material force been thus concentrated in a body, possessing both intense political conviction and consummate military discipline. They were the passion, the courage, the conscience of the people in arms; a political group, in energy and will stronger than all other groups together; a corps of soldiers who had no equals in Europe. They had none of the vices of an army; none of the restlessness of a political faction. Their political ideas were few, but very definite, and held with intense tenacity: religious freedom, orderly government, and the final abolition of the abuses for which Laud and Charles had died. In religion they were mainly Inde-

pendents, seeking the widest liberty for themselves and others. Their wishes as soldiers were for peace, to return to their homes and to civil life. Devoted to their great chief, and profoundly trusting his honesty and wisdom, they maintained unbroken discipline within as well as without their body, leaving affairs of State to him and to his council of officers.

Parliament, or the thin residuum of the House of Commons which claimed that name, practically consisted of a junto of men who, after so many expulsions, purges, and abstentions of all sorts, continued to meet, to the average number of fifty, occasionally reaching a little more than one hundred. In spite of frequent siftings, the House was constantly gravitating back into the hands of lawyers and Presbyterians. The Council of State—of forty-one members, almost all members of Parliament—was only a committee of the House, where soldiers and administrators had predominant influence, and which virtually governed the nation. Cromwell, his officers, and a few men of action practically directed the Council. But it was far too large for an efficient cabinet; it was divided by very contrary views; and its activity was constantly impeded by the House which had appointed it.

It is fortunate that in our English revolution it is in no way necessary to disparage one set of men in order to do justice to their opponents. Both House and Council contained many men of great ability and character. Some of the stoutest and purest spirits in our history were in their number. There were indefatigable men of business, excellent administrators, keen and subtle brains, and above all, sterling honesty and excellent sense amongst them. In one or two there was a real

vein of heroism and of sagacity. Still there was but one statesman of consummate genius; and that fact many of them were slow to recognise.

Cromwell, now inwardly assured that he had been called by God and by all good men to take the foremost place, stood apart from all the various sections by reason of his far wider grasp of the whole situation and his constructive and organising instinct. In his official despatch after the victory at Dunbar (4th September 1650) he had broken out to the Speaker with the abrupt appeal: "Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions:—and if there be any one such that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." So now on the morrow of Worcester (4th September 1651) he again implored the House that "justice and righteousness, mercy and truth, may flow from you, as a thankful return to our gracious God."

Always strongly conservative, he set his face steadily towards "a settlement of this nation." Always zealous for social order, he looked directly for the mending of practical wrongs. The state of the Church, the state of the law, the manifold grievances and sufferings of men on all sides, and the confusion of all institutions and authorities, filled him with horror and pity. Everything in Church and State was alike provisional and chaotic. The scanty oligarchy which clung to the bare name of Parliament—a Parliament which had been summoned by King Charles eleven years ago—never could be accepted by the nation as its genuine representative in the great change of government. The Episcopal Church was

suppressed, yet the Presbyterian Church was not set up on any permanent or complete basis. The House continually and fitfully interfered in religious questions, from the point of view of rigid Presbyterian orthodoxy. The Royalists were still harried with the most crushing exactions, and held everything on sufferance. The relations with foreign countries were precarious, and with the Dutch they werē hostile.

The law in especial manner was in a state of chaos. There were 23,000 unheard cases waiting in Chancery ; and this was a perpetual grievance both to the general and his soldiers. It might surprise us to find the army and its chief so constantly troubled about the abuses of the law, did we not remember that the Civil War was the turning-point in the history of English law ; that it shattered the whole system of feudal tenure, and with the Restoration we find the land law mainly what it continued to be down to the present century. The period of transition was a time of chaos and injustice, and Cromwell and his Ironsides were men to whom social injustice and official tyranny never appealed in vain. But, besides the law, practical questions had to be solved. An army of 50,000 men had to be reduced to one-half. A mass of diseased and wretched prisoners had to be disposed of ; the fortresses and castles dismantled, reduced, or repaired. Ireland and Scotland had to be brought into permanent settlement. In one word, a nation which had been torn by ten years of desperate civil war, and of which every institution had been passing through a crisis, lay waiting for order, settlement, and reorganisation.

The difficulties were all grouped round two great

questions: "the settlement of the nation" and a "new representative"; or, as we should now say, a permanent constitution and a new Parliament. Without the former, Cromwell saw, everything remained an open question; no man could feel secure, and peace would never begin. Without the latter, no reform was possible in Church, law, taxation, or in legal or civil reorganisation. The Council of State and its commissions sufficed for daily administration. The army, the navy, the ordnance, Ireland and Scotland, and the treasury, were managed with energy and skill. But in order to settle ecclesiastical and legal questions, to close the system of confiscation, and to return to regular government, legislation was necessary. And for practical legislation the House was incompetent. The lawyers, the Presbyterians, the reactionists, and the pedants debated each Bill for months. The House drifted into a permanent attitude of reaction; by turns learned, loquacious, impracticable, self-important, and bigoted.

Cromwell was bent on a "settlement," the difficulties of which he clearly saw. He showed such a willingness to come to terms with the defeated party, and such real sympathy with their protracted sufferings, that the sterner spirits at once accused him of gaining the goodwill of the Royalists to serve his own designs. He plainly saw that the nation was not prepared for a definite republic; nor had he himself any preference for it. He also saw, as the lawyers continually showed him, that without some monarchical element, the English constitution, the English scheme of government and of law, could scarcely be got into work again. For

a reorganisation of the body politic, as distinct from its complete transformation, a person as ruler was essential. Cromwell was profoundly convinced of this; and as a matter of law and of history he was plainly right. The difficulties were, however, not slight. The army and the zealous Puritans were against the very name of king, and especially averse to any prince of the late king's house. The lawyers, on the other hand, could not conceive of the monarchical element in any other form. Cromwell's own mind inclined towards a personal head of the State, though he still shrunk from the name of king.

Nothing can be plainer than this, that his whole soul rejected the idea of a mere Parliamentary executive: government vested in a single elective chamber. By character, from experience, and by conviction, he was rooted to the idea of a double authority: a person permanently charged with the executive, and a co-ordinate elected legislature. The whole future history of England lay in this struggle,—the alternative of the American system with its distinct personal executive, or the modern British system of a single supreme Parliament having the executive as a part and creature of itself. After many fluctuations and an irregular epoch of oligarchy, the Parliamentary system of government triumphed; and for a century at least it has kept undisputed ascendancy. But it is not proved thereby that Cromwell was wrong.

The struggle between Cromwell and the House was on neither side a question of personal ambition. It was a struggle between two far-reaching principles of government; the struggle as to whether executive authority

shall be subordinate to, or co-ordinate with, the legislature. It was at bottom the same principle which, under very various forms and with very different aims, great English statesmen have more or less asserted—Elizabeth, Strafford, Cromwell, William III., Walpole, and Chatham; and which the founders of the American constitution successfully worked out across the Atlantic. Parliamentary executive is still the great problem of our time. After Worcester it presented itself for the first time in our history; claiming to be a permanent and dominant institution. Within a few days of Cromwell's return, the question of the new Parliament was raised, evidently at his desire. For three months the question was revived and pressed, until, at last, after repeated divisions and debates, the House was induced, by a majority of two, to vote its dissolution. This it fixed for a date three years distant, 3d November 1654. But in the meantime many things were to happen.

Around the great question at issue between Cromwell and the House, the minor questions were grouped. Cromwell and the army clung to entire freedom of worship; the House to Presbyterian orthodoxy. Cromwell now felt himself to be in the higher sense the representative of the nation, the guardian of the interests of all, even of those he had defeated. The Parliament men, filled with pride in their successful revolution, could not see that the time had come for putting an end to revolution. Cromwell insisted on an amnesty and on closing the system of confiscation; the House would not resign the revolutionary expedient of raising supplies. Cromwell's strength

rested on the army ; the House sought to reduce it in order to strengthen the navy. Mainly for political objects, Vane and his party plunged into the Dutch war. Cromwell and his soldiers were for making a short cut to practical reforms ; the House, with its lawyers and officials, saw obstacles and dangers in every reform. As the army trusted its cause to Cromwell, so the House was represented by Vane, its most eminent leader, a man as heroic and generous as Cromwell himself, of varied capacity and unwearied energy. Both Cromwell and Vane represented parties who had borne the heat and burden of the day, and who had done great things for the common cause, the one in the field, the other in council. Neither party could claim the majority of the nation ; perhaps both together could not claim it. Parliament, now alike unpopular and incompetent, had nothing but a shred of legal right. But Cromwell wielded overwhelming force, and embodied the hopes and the trust of the best men.

Immediately on his return from Worcester, Cromwell found himself addressed by petitions for the redress of grievances, in the matter of law, of imprisonment, of exactions, of tithes, as to one, said the petitioners, into whose hands the sword was put. And commissions were actually issued to officers to hear and determine civil cases, which gave great satisfaction to the parties. The Lord-General was thus passing by consent into the position of general Moderator. It was at this time that Whitelocke places the famous discussion he records as to the settlement of the nation. Cromwell, he says, desired a meeting between the leaders in Parliament and the chiefs of the army. There he very plainly

stated the issue thus: whether a republic or a mixed monarchical government will be best; and if anything monarchical, then in whom that power should be placed? The lawyers were for a mixed monarchy; the generals for a republic. "The laws of England are so interwoven with the power and practice of a monarchy," said Whitelocke, "that to settle a government without something of monarchy in it" would lead to incalculable inconveniences. He and others evidently inclined to a restoration of one of the Stuart princes. The generals asked why not a republic as well as other nations? Cromwell, it is clear, objected to any recall of the princes; but he thought "that a settlement of somewhat with monarchical power in it would be very effectual." It is plain that from this time he gave it to be understood that he desired a settlement with himself invested with some monarchical power; though, as to the name or prerogative of king, he felt and continued to feel the deepest hesitation and doubt.

The question was indeed one of extraordinary complication and difficulty. Legally speaking, the whole fabric of the body politic, the daily routine of law and of administration, centred in the name and authority of the king. A king *de facto*, with or without hereditary right, even a usurper, fulfilled the legal conditions. By a statute of Henry VII. acts done under the authority of a *de facto* king, even a usurper, were not acts of treason. But without a *de facto* king, the old system of law and order would have to be remodelled from its base. Between the Puritan chiefs and the royal house an indelible bar seemed set. One might be a lawful king, who had conquered his throne by the sword or had been

called in by Parliament; but a king without trace of royal blood was undreamed of in England. The gulf that separated the most absolute military ruler from the same man regularly proclaimed king was immense—legally, morally, and socially. But then what would bring soldiers like Harrison, politicians like Vane, to acquiesce in the proclamation of *Oliver Rex*? The problem was perhaps insoluble. In the meantime Cromwell worked towards a settlement to have in it somewhat of a monarchical power, and left the issue to time.

All through the year 1652 the struggle went on, Cromwell and his officers continually pressing the House to complete the reforms and settle a new Parliament; the House eternally debating, obstinately bent on retaining its legal autocracy. The story of the contest was told by Oliver most truthfully and simply in his public speeches. He and his soldiers were resolved, he said, that the nation should reap the fruit of all the blood and treasure that had been spent in the cause. The officers had begun by private appeals to the House: in August they presented a petition embodying their demands—provision for preaching the Gospel, removal of scandalous ministers, reform of the law, redress of abuses in excise, in tithes, in the treasury, and lastly, provision for a new Parliament. They got no answer but a few words. Then, “finding the People dissatisfied in every corner of the nation, and laying at our doors the non-performance of these things,” Cromwell declares that he called a series of meetings between the leaders in Parliament and the chiefs of the army. Ten or twelve such meetings were held without result.

In November Cromwell met Whitelocke, and asked him "to consider the dangerous condition we are all in." The members of Parliament, he said, were become odious to the army for their pride and ambition and self-seeking, their delays of business and their design to perpetuate themselves to continue the power in their hands, for their meddling in private matters, for their injustice and partiality, and the scandalous lives of some of the chief of them. People open their mouths against them, he said; and they cannot be kept within bounds of justice and law or reason, for there is none superior or co-ordinate with them. "What," said he abruptly, "if a man should take upon him to be king?" Whitelocke implored him to consider the danger and the evil, and urged a compromise with Charles Stuart. "That," said Cromwell, "is a matter of so high importance and difficulty, that it deserves more of consideration and debate."

The House, led by Vane, now altered its tactics, and began to press on a Bill for a new representation, a plan which, with much parade of free election, was simply a scheme to perpetuate themselves. The existing members were to sit without re-election, and were to form an exclusive tribunal for admitting new members. It was a transparent artifice to continue themselves, whilst adding such additional members as they might approve. Cromwell thereupon called another conference at his own house. Some twenty-three members attended on the 19th April 1653. There he and the generals told the Parliament men clearly that they would not suffer them to pass such an Act. They proposed as an alternative a temporary commission of forty leading men to summon

a new Parliament. The sitting ended late at night without decision; it was agreed to meet the next day, with an understanding that in the meantime the Act should not be passed.

The next day the conference was renewed at Cromwell's lodgings. There news was brought that the House was hastily passing the obnoxious measure. Presently Colonel Ingoldsby came in from the House to tell the general that not a moment was to be lost, if he meant to do anything. Furious at what he believed, perhaps without reason, to be the bad faith of Vane and the leaders, he called a company of musketeers to attend him, and with Lambert and other officers, strode silently to the House. In plain black clothes and gray worsted stockings, the Lord-General came in quietly and took his seat, as Vane was pressing the House to pass the dissolution Bill without delay and without the customary forms. He beckoned to Harrison and told him that the Parliament was ripe for dissolution, and he must do it. "Sir," said Harrison, "the work is very great and dangerous."—"You say well," said the general, and thereupon sat still for about a quarter of an hour. Vane sat down, and the Speaker was putting the question for passing the Bill. Then said Cromwell to Harrison again, "This is the time; I must do it." He rose up, put off his hat, and spoke.

Beginning moderately and respectfully, he presently changed his style, told them of their injustice, delays of justice, self-interest, and other faults; charging them not to have a heart to do anything for the public good, to have espoused the corrupt interest of Presbytery and the lawyers, who were the supporters of tyranny and

oppression, accusing them of an intention to perpetuate themselves in power. And rising into passion, "as if he were distracted," he told them that the Lord had done with them, and had chosen other instruments for the carrying on His work that were worthy. Sir Peter Wentworth rose to complain of such language in Parliament, coming from their own trusted servant. Roused to fury by the interruption, Cromwell left his seat, clapped on his hat, walked up and down the floor of the House, stamping with his feet, and cried out, "You are no Parliament, I say you are no Parliament. Come, come, we have had enough of this; I will put an end to your prating. Call them in!" Twenty or thirty musketeers under Colonel Worsley marched in on to the floor of the House. The rest of the guard were placed at the door and in the lobby.

Vane from his place cried out, "This is not honest, yea, it is against morality and common honesty." Cromwell, who evidently regarded Vane as the breaker of the supposed agreement, turned on him with a loud voice, crying, "O Sir Henry Vane, Sir Henry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Henry Vane." Then looking upon one of the members, he said, "There sits a drunkard;" to another he said, "Some of you are unjust, corrupt persons, and scandalous to the profession of the Gospel." "Some are whoremasters," he said, looking at Wentworth and Marten. Going up to the table, he said, "What shall we do with this Bauble? Here take it away!" and gave it to a musketeer. "Fetch him down," he cried to Harrison, pointing to the Speaker. Lenthall sat still, and refused to come down unless by force. "Sir," said Harrison, "I will lend you my hand,"

and putting his hand within his, the Speaker came down. Algernon Sidney sat still in his place. "Put him out," said Cromwell. And Harrison and Worsley put their hands on his shoulders, and he rose and went out. The members went out, fifty-three in all, Cromwell still calling aloud. To Vane he said that he might have prevented this; but that he was a juggler and had not common honesty. "It is you," he said, as they passed him, "that have forced me to do this, for I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me on the doing of this work." He snatched the Bill of dissolution from the hand of the clerk, put it under his cloak, seized on the records, ordered the guard to clear the House of all members, and to have the door locked, and went away to Whitehall.

Such is one of the most famous scenes in our history, that which of all other things has most heavily weighed on the fame of Cromwell. In truth it is a matter of no small complexity, which neither constitutional eloquence nor boisterous sarcasm has quite adequately unravelled. Both in essence and in form much may be said on both sides. Perhaps even more than the act in itself, the mode and the circumstances have caused indignation and offence. It is one of the rare occasions in all history where a great act of State has been carried out with personal fury and outrage. And it is hard to imagine the end which personal fury and outrage can serve. There was no other public occasion on which Cromwell displayed ungovernable passion. But he was a man of volcanic temper, at all times liable to outbursts of coarseness. From his youth he was given to moody frenzies and ecstatic outpourings of the inmost soul.

The practice of Bible expounding in the camp had developed in him an unctuous and heated mannerism. At times in battle, we have seen, he seemed deliberately to fling off all control, as when at Drogheda and at Worcester he dashed into the fray with a fury which can hardly be forgiven in a supreme commander. The story reads to us as if Cromwell, resolved not to be checkmated by the Bill, had not quite decided how in detail he would act. Then committing himself to an unbridled rage, in the consciousness of overpowering force and a direct mission from God, he let the whole torrent of his will and of his scorn boil over in the sight of all men.

In strict constitutional right the House was no more the Parliament than Cromwell was the king. A House of Commons, which had executed the king, abolished the Lords, approved the *coup d'état* of Pride, and by successive proscriptions had reduced itself to a few score of extreme partisans, had no legal title to the name of Parliament. The junta which held to Vane was not more numerous than the junta which held to Cromwell; they had far less public support; nor had their services to the Cause been so great. In closing the House, the Lord-General had used his office of Commander-in-Chief to anticipate one *coup d'état* by another. Had he been ten minutes late, Vane would himself have dissolved the House; snapping a vote which would give his faction a legal ascendancy. Yet, after all, the fact remains that Vane and the remnant of the famous Long Parliament had that *scintilla juris*, as lawyers call it, that semblance of legal right which counts for so much in things political. Civil society is held together by conventional respect for legalised authority. And in the shipwreck

of the Constitution some *tabula in naufragio*, to use a legal metaphor, still rested in the hands of the few score members who remained. History and Englishmen have not yet forgiven the great soldier who broke through this ancient conventional respect, tearing down a legal *simulacrum*, useless and obstructive as it long had been. In the mind of Cromwell, always impatient of legal conventions, the urgent call of public duty and the manifest favour of Heaven outweighed all the evils which must have been suggested to him by his prudence, his sagacity, and his wonderful knowledge of men.

His deed must be judged by its results and its essence. Was it good, was it necessary, for Cromwell to anticipate Vane? Were the moral forces with Vane or with Cromwell? The technical rights of either were shadowy enough; the act took place in mid-revolution and utter chaos; public confidence was in no way shaken. So stated, it is plain that it was Cromwell, and not Vane, who could give the nation peace, good government, legal, social, and religious reform. It was Cromwell, and not Vane, who had behind him the effective weight of the nation. If Cromwell had in numbers less than a majority of the people, Vane had behind him nothing but an unpopular and divided faction. Coarse and violent as was Cromwell's conduct, high-minded and patriotic as was Vane's nature, Cromwell was a mighty statesman, and Vane was only a noble character. The final judgment of history must come back to the prevalent opinion of the time: that, outside a small group of partisans and doctrinaire republicans, no man regretted Cromwell's act. A year and a half later he said in Parliament:—

"I told them,—for I knew it better than any one man in the Parliament could know it : because of my manner of life which was to run up and down the nation, thereby giving me to see and know the temper and spirits of all men, and of the best of men,—that the Nation loathed their sitting, I knew it. And, so far as I could discern, when they were dissolved, there was not so much as the barking of a dog, or any general or visible repining at it ! You are not a few here present who can assert this as well as myself."

Returning to Whitehall, Cromwell found the officers still in council, and after some expressions of dissent, he satisfied them of the justice of his act. In the afternoon, attended by Lambert and Harrison, he went down to the Council of State. He told them that there was no place for them there, as the Parliament was dissolved. Bradshaw, Scott, Haslerig, and others protested, and then, without more words, withdrew. Three days later a long, elaborate, and Biblical document appeared, as the "Declaration of the Lord-General and his Council of Officers." It evidently embodies Cromwell's own mind, if it were not written by his hand, and entirely agrees with the account given in his speeches. It asserted that the honest people of the nation and the army, having sought the Lord, felt it to be a duty to secure the cause and to establish righteousness and peace in these nations ; as the late Parliament were seeking to perpetuate themselves, they had been necessitated to put an end to it. It concluded with a long sermon on the duty of godly men ; and order was given that all judges, sheriffs, mayors, and other civil officers should proceed in the execution of their respective offices. Within a few days came in declarations of adhesion from the navy, the armies in Scotland and in Ireland, and addresses from

municipal and civic bodies. There were no resignations, no arrests, no further force. The fighting men approved, the officials obeyed, the nation acquiesced. And without a show of opposition, the whole machinery of the State passed quietly into the strong hand of Cromwell.

He was determined that it should be no military despotism. Resolute as he was that there should be a person as head of the State, he was equally resolute that the government should be a civil government, with an elected legislature, a Parliament to vote taxes and make laws, and an executive bound in legal limits. What he did, he told the Little Parliament, was not to grasp at the power himself, or to keep it in military hands, no, not for a day; but to put it into the hands of proper persons that might be called from the several parts of the nation. Ten days after the close of the Long Parliament Cromwell issued a further declaration in his own name, that Parliament being dissolved, persons of approved fidelity and honesty were to be called from the several parts of this Commonwealth to the supreme authority, and in the meantime a Council of State should be constituted. An interim Council of thirteen, four of them civilians, was appointed; and summonses were issued to divers persons to undertake the "Trust" of the government of the Commonwealth. In the meantime for nine weeks Oliver continued to govern, by the advice of the Council and his officers.

Some hundred and forty summonses were issued by Cromwell to "persons fearing God, and of approved fidelity and honesty"—names mainly suggested, it seems, by the "godly clergy." Some were men of rank and fortune; eighteen had sat in the Long Parliament;

Monk and Blake and some soldiers were members, and some were extreme types of the Puritan sects. Only two did not attend. They met on the 4th of July 1653; they sat five months; passed some useful measures, raised many burning questions, were named the Little Parliament. Cromwell opened the sitting with a long and powerful speech. He began by the story of the civil wars; how God had raised up a poor and contemptible company of men and given them success, simply by their owning a principle of godliness and religion. How the Long Parliament had become impracticable; how in many months together they had failed to settle one word, "incumbrances"; how, as they had neglected all their duties, they had been dissolved. How the general, anxious "to divest the sword of all power in the civil administration, had summoned them that he might devolve the burden on their shoulders." In thus calling them to the exercises of the supreme authority, he that means to be their servant takes occasion to offer them some charge. Then he bursts into an impassioned sermon, taking texts from the prophets, the psalms, the epistles—a sermon rich with grand passages, with quaint, homely, vivid phrases, such as Bunyan might have uttered, fatherly exhortations to righteousness and trust in God. Finally he turns again to his favourite psalm, the 68th, the psalm he sang on the field of Dunbar: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. . . . The earth shook, the heavens also dropped in the presence of God. . . . The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." "And indeed," cries out the Puritan

soldier, "the triumph of that psalm is exceeding high and great; and God is accomplishing it." Never before in the history of England was Parliament opened by speech like that.

This is the first of those speeches of Cromwell to his Parliament, some nineteen in all, which are amongst the most precious records of history. Now that laborious love has unveiled them to us, we can look down through them into the inmost spirit of the man. Uncouth, tangled, and periphrastic as much in them seems to us, wrapped up in a Biblical verbiage which has long been confined to the pulpit, ill-reported, full of broken sentences and confused periods, there is yet in them an innate majesty and truthfulness; nay, eloquence; even poetry and pathos. We hear the very beat of a great, generous heart; we see the flash of an heroic temper, full of trust, of sublime desires, of unshaken courage. The religious hopes are not ours; the cast of mind is one which only by an effort can we picture to ourselves; the mixture of practical business with the promises and manifestations of God to the saints is to us so strange as to sound hardly sane. Yet such is the greatest attempt ever made in history to found a civil society on the literal words of Scripture. So deep is the gulf which, in things spiritual, two centuries and a half have set between them and us.

The doings of this assembly of Puritan notables need not detain us. Cromwell plainly designed them to be a constituent, not a permanent body; to call a regular Parliament; and to exercise provisional authority. There never was before, he said, a supreme authority so called, 140 persons not one but had in him faith

of the ramparts. St. Peter's Church was set on fire by Cromwell's order. He writes to the speaker: "Indeed, being in the heat of action, I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the Town: and I think that night they put to the sword about 2000 men." Next day the other towers were summoned, and the work of slaughter was renewed for two days, until the entire garrison was annihilated. It was unquestionably a massacre. "That night they put to the sword about 2000 men." In Peter's Church "near 1000 of them were put to the sword, fleeing thither for safety." "Their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously." "I do not think we lost 100 men upon the place." Such are passages from Cromwell's own despatches.

The slaughter was indeed prodigious. The general writes: "I believe we put to the sword the whole number of the defendants. I do not think Thirty of the whole number escaped with their lives." "The enemy were about 3000 strong in the town." "I do not believe, neither do I hear, that any officer escaped with his life, save only one Lieutenant." He subsequently gives a detailed list of the slain, amounting to about 3000. Hugh Peters, the chaplain, reports as follows: "Sir, the truth is, Drogheda is taken, 3552 of the enemy slain, and 64 of ours. Ashton, the governor, killed, none spared." It is also certain that quarter was refused. "I forbade them to spare any that were in arms in the town." It is expressly told us that all officers and all priests taken were killed. From the days of Clarendon it has been repeated by historians that men, women, and children were indiscriminately slaughtered, and there is evidence of an eye-witness to

that effect ; but this is not believed to have been done by the order or even with the knowledge of the general. The Royalist accounts insist that quarter was promised at first ; and that the butchery of men in cold blood was carried on for days. Here again the act must have been exceptional and without authority. [See Appendix C.]

To Cromwell himself this fearful slaughter was a signal triumph of the truth. "It hath pleased God to bless our endeavours." "This hath been a marvellous great mercy." "I am persuaded that this is a righteous judgment of God upon these barbarous wretches, who have imbued their hands in so much innocent blood ; and that it will tend to prevent the effusion of blood for the future. Which are the satisfactory grounds to such actions, which otherwise cannot but work remorse and regret." "It was set upon some of our hearts, That a great thing should be done, not by power or might, but by the Spirit of God." In the same sense it was received by Parliament and Council of State, by some of the noblest spirits of their age. Ludlow says simply that this "extraordinary severity was used to discourage others from making opposition." It had always been the policy of Cromwell in battle to inflict a crushing defeat ; at Marston, at Naseby, and at Preston he had "taken execution of the enemy" for hours and over miles of country. At Basing and elsewhere, after a summons and a storm, he had slaughtered hundreds without mercy. And such was the law of war in that age, practised on both sides without hesitation. But the item of numbers and of time tells very heavily here. The killing of hundreds in hot blood differs from the massacre of thousands during days. There was no

such act in the whole Civil War as the massacre—prolonged for days—of 3000 men enclosed in walls entirely at the mercy of their captors, to say nothing of the promiscuous slaughter of priests, if not of women and unarmed men. In England such a deed could not have been done; and not in Ireland, but that they were Catholics fighting in defence of their faith. The fact that the garrison were Catholics, fighting on Irish soil, placed them, to the Puritan Englishman, out of the pale. No admiration for Cromwell, for his genius, courage, and earnestness—no sympathy with the cause that he upheld in England—can blind us to the truth, that the lurid light of this great crime burns still after centuries across the history of England and of Ireland; that it is one of those damning charges which the Puritan theology has yet to answer at the bar of humanity.

The tremendous blow at Drogheda struck terror into Ormond's forces. Dundalk and Trim were abandoned in haste. O'Neil swore a great oath that as Cromwell had stormed Drogheda, if he should storm hell he should take it. One fort after another yielded; and in a fortnight from the taking of Drogheda, Cromwell was master of the country north of Dublin. Marching from Dublin south, on the 23d of September, his army took forts in Wicklow, Arklow, and Enniscorthy; and on the 1st of October the general encamped before Wexford, an important seaport at the south-eastern corner of the island. The town was strong, with a rampart 15 feet thick, a garrison of over 2000 men, 100 cannon, and in the harbour two ships armed with 54 guns. Cromwell summoned the governor to surrender, not obscurely threatening him with the fate of Drogheda.

"It will clearly appear," he said, "where the guilt will lie, if innocent persons should come to suffer with the nocent." His terms were quarter and prison to the officers, quarter and freedom to the soldiers, protection from plunder to the town. These terms were refused, and both sides continued the fight. Suddenly, some breaches being made in the castle, the captain surrendered it, and by a surprise the whole army of the Commonwealth poured into the town. The townsmen took part in the defence; and townsmen and garrison together were forced into the market-place. There, as at Drogheda, a promiscuous massacre ensued. Upwards of 2000 were slain, and with them not a few of the citizens; and the town was delivered over to pillage. It is asserted by the Catholic writers that a body of women, who had taken refuge round the cross, were deliberately slaughtered, and that a general massacre took place without regard to sex or age. Priests were killed at once, and in the sack and pillage, undoubtedly some non-combatants, it may be some women and children. But these things were incidents of such a storm, and were not done by design or order of the general. This is his own story:—

"Whilst I was preparing of it; studying to preserve the Town from plunder, that it might be of the more use to you and your Army,—the Captain, who was one of the Commissioners, being fairly treated, yielded up the Castle to us. Upon the top of which our men no sooner appeared, but the Enemy quitted the Walls of the Town; which our men perceiving, ran violently upon the Town with their ladders, and stormed it. And when they were come into the market-place, the Enemy making a stiff resistance, our forces brake them; and then put all to the sword that came in their way.

Two boatfuls of the Enemy attempting to escape, being overprest with numbers, sank ; whereby were drowned near three-hundred of them. I believe, in all, there was lost of the Enemy not many less than Two-thousand ; and I believe not Twenty of yours from first to last of the Siege. And indeed it hath, not without cause, been deeply set upon our hearts, That, we intending better to this place than so great a ruin, hoping the Town might be of more use to you and your Army, yet God would not have it so ; but by an unexpected providence, in His righteous justice, brought a just judgment upon them ; causing them to become a prey to the Soldier—who in their piracies had made preys of so many families, and now with their bloods to answer the cruelties which they have exercised upon the lives of divers poor Protestants ! . . .

“This Town is now so in your power, that of the former inhabitants, I believe scarce one in twenty can challenge any property in their houses. Most of them are run away, and many of them killed in this service. And it were to be wished that an honest people would come and plant here.”

The blow that had desolated Drogheda and Wexford did not need to be repeated. Ross was taken ; the Munster garrisons—Cork, Kinsale, and others—joined the Commonwealth. And within three months of Cromwell's march from Dublin, the whole of the towns on the eastern and southern sides of Ireland, except Waterford and some others, were reduced to the Parliament. Waterford resisted him ; a wet winter set in ; and with the wet, dysentery and fever. Cromwell fell ill ; many officers sickened ; General Jones died. “What England lost hereby is above me to speak,” wrote the general. “I am sure I lost a noble friend and companion in labours. You see how God mingles out the cup to us. Indeed we are at this time a crazy company : yet we live in His sight ; and shall work the time that is appointed us, and shall rest after that in peace.”

After a short rest, on the 29th of January, Cromwell was again in the field. He passed into the heart of the island—into Kilkenny and Tipperary; Clogheen, Castle-town, Fethard, Callan, Cashel, Cahir, Kilkenny, Carrick, were taken after a short defence; and Clonmel at last surrendered after a desperate attempt at storm, which cost Cromwell, it is said, 2000 men. This was his last great fight in Ireland. He had now crushed opposition in the whole east and south of the island; the north had returned to the Protestant cause; Waterford fell soon after; and except Limerick, Galway, and a few fortresses, the Parliament's forces were masters of the island. Cromwell had been nine months in Ireland, and at no time possessed an army of more than 15,000 men. Within that time he had taken a score of strong places, and in a series of bloody encounters had dispersed or annihilated armies of far greater number than his own. An official summons to England had been sent in January; it was not till the end of May that he actually obeyed it.

As Cromwell's practice in warfare in Ireland differed somewhat from what he observed elsewhere, and as from that day to this it has been the subject of furious invective, a few words thereon are plainly needed. Cromwell had gone to Ireland, at imminent risk to his cause, to recover it to the Parliament in the shortest possible time, and with a relatively small army. He had gone there first to punish (as was believed) a wholesale massacre and a social revolution, to restore the Irish soil to England, and to replace the Protestant ascendancy. In the view of the Commonwealth government, the mass was by law a crime, Catholic priests were

legally outlaws, and all who resisted the Parliament were constructively guilty of murder and rebellion. Such were the accepted axioms of the whole Puritan party, and of Cromwell as much as any man.

In such a war he held that where a place was stormed after summons, all in arms might justly be put to the sword, though no longer capable of resistance, and though they amounted to thousands. "They," he writes, "refusing conditions seasonably offered, were all put to the sword." Repeatedly he shot all officers who surrendered at discretion. Officers who had once served the Parliament he hanged. Priests, taken alive, were hanged. "As for your clergymen, as you call them," wrote Oliver to the Governor of Kilkenny, "in case you agree for a surrender, they shall march away safely; but if they fall otherwise into my hands, I believe they know what to expect from me." At Gowran the castle surrendered. "The next day, the Colonel, the Major, and the rest of the Commission officers were shot to death: . . . In the same castle also he took a Popish Priest, who was chaplain to the Catholics in this regiment; who was caused to be hanged." The Bishop of Ross, marching to save Clonmel with 5000 men, was defeated by Broghill, captured, and hanged in sight of his own men. The Bishop of Clogher was routed by Coote and Venables and shared the same fate. "All their friars were knocked on the head promiscuously," Cromwell wrote at Drogheda, as the Catholic martyrologies assert with torture. Peaceable inhabitants were not to be molested. But all who had taken part in or supported the rebellion of 1641 were liable to justice.

For soldiers he found a new career. By a stroke of

profound policy he encouraged foreign embassies to enlist Irish volunteers, giving them a free pass abroad. And thus it is said some 40,000 Irishmen ultimately passed into the service of foreign sovereigns. With great energy and skill the Lord-Lieutenant set about the reorganisation of government in Ireland. A leading feature of this was the Cromwellian settlement afterwards carried out under the Protectorate, by which immense tracts of land in the provinces of Ulster, Leinster, and Munster were allotted to English settlers, and the landowners of Irish birth removed into Connaught.

Cromwell has left on record his own principles of action in the famous Declaration which he issued in January in reply to the Irish bishops:—

Ireland, he says, was once united to England. Englishmen had inheritances and leases which they had purchased: and they lived peaceably. “You broke this Union. You, unprovoked, put the English to the most unheard-of and most barbarous massacre (without respect of sex or age) that ever the sun beheld.” It is a fig-leaf of pretence, that they fight for their king: really it is for men guilty of blood:—*bellum prelatium et religiosum*—as you say. “You are a part of Anti-Christ, whose kingdom the Scripture so expressly speaks should be laid in blood, yea in the blood of the saints.” “You quote my own words at Ross,” he says, “that where the Parliament of England have power, the exercise of the mass will not be allowed of; and you say that this is a design to extirpate the Catholic religion. I cannot extirpate what has never been rooted. These are my intentions. I shall not, where I have power, suffer the exercise of the mass. Nor shall I suffer any Papists, where I find them seducing the people, or by overt act violating the laws.” “As for the people, what thoughts they have in matters of religion in their own breasts I cannot reach.” But as to the charge of massacre, destruction, or banishment he says: “*Give us an*

instance of one man since my coming into Ireland, not in arms, massacred, destroyed or banished ; concerning the massacre or the destruction of whom justice hath not been done, or endeavoured to be done."

This very pointed and daring challenge could hardly have been publicly made by such a man as Cromwell, if, to his knowledge, a slaughter of women and unarmed men had occurred. On the other hand, it is certain that priests and others had been killed in cold blood ; and a general who delivers over a city to pillage, and forbids quarter, can hardly say where outrage and massacre will cease. As to banishment, the "Cromwellian settlement" was necessarily based on the banishment of those whom the settlers displaced.

With regard to the policy of confiscation and resettlement, Cromwell warmly justifies it. It is the just way of meeting rebellion, he says. You have forfeited your estates, and it is just to raise money by escheating your lands. But apart from the land forfeited, which is but a part of the account, if ever men were engaged in a just and righteous cause it was this, he asserts : —

"We are come to ask an account of the innocent blood that hath been shed ; and to endeavour to bring to an account, — by the presence and blessing of the Almighty, in whom alone is our hope and strength, — all who, by appearing in arms, seek to justify the same. We come to break the power of lawless Rebels, who having cast off the Authority of England, live as enemies to Human Society ; whose principles, the world hath experience, are, To destroy and subjugate all men not complying with them. We come, by the assistance of God, to hold forth and maintain the lustre and glory of English Liberty in a Nation where we have an undoubted right to do it ; — wherein the people of Ireland (if they listen not to such seducers as you are) may equally participate in

all benefits ; to use liberty and fortune equally with Englishmen, if they keep out of arms."

Such was the basis of the famous "Cromwellian settlement"—by far the most thorough act in the long history of the conquest of Ireland ; by far the most wholesale effort to impose on Ireland the Protestant faith and English ascendancy. Wholesale and thorough, but not enough for its purpose. It failed like all the others ; did more, perhaps, than any other to bind Ireland to the Catholic Church, and to alienate Irishmen from the English rule. On the Irish race it has left undying memories and a legend of tyranny which is summed up in the peasants' saying of the *Curse of Cromwell*.

Cromwell, not worse than the Puritans and English of his age, but nobler and more just, must yet for generations to come bear the weight of the legendary "curse." He was the incarnation of Puritan passion, the instrument of English ambition ; the official authority by whom the whole work was carried out, the one man ultimately responsible for the rest ; and it is thus that on him lies chiefly the weight of this secular national quarrel.

Oliver, leaving Ireland to his son-in-law Ireton, and appointing civil and military chiefs, reached London on the 31st of May. Here he was received with a salute of big guns, honours, and acclamations ; Fairfax, members of Parliament, and a great multitude coming out to welcome him. The Cockpit was appointed as his residence ; the city of London, Parliament, and many persons of quality offered their congratulations "on the safe arrival of his Excellence after so many dangers

both by sea and land, wherein God had preserved him, and the wonderful successes which He had given him." As he passed Tyburn in his thronged procession, one said to him, "See what a multitude of people come to attend your triumph!" He answered with a smile and very unconcerned, "*More would come to see me hanged!*"

APPENDIX C

No part of the history of these times is more beset with contradictory accounts than the details of the Irish war. Race hatred and sectarian mendacity have carried contradiction to the extreme limit. Was the garrison of Drogheda English or Irish; was there a promiscuous massacre there of citizens and women? On these two points there is deliberate contradiction.

As to the garrison, Clarendon says, "most of them English." In another place he speaks of the "massacre of that body of English at Tredagh." So also say Ludlow and Bates. Whitelocke says, "mostly Irish." Ormond says they were chiefly Catholics; and the Irish writers interpret this to mean Irish. Cromwell's despatch at Drogheda ends thus: "2500 Foot-soldiers besides Staff-officers, Surgeons, etc." This appears in the *Parliamentary History* with the added words, "*and many inhabitants,*" and has been so copied into many histories.

The letter from Clonmel in *Cromwelliana* (10th May 1650) runs thus: "We discovered the enemy to be gone, and very early this morning pursued them, and fell upon their reare of straglers, and killed above 200, *besides those we slew in the storm.*" S. Dillingham, writing to Sancroft from Gutter Lane (May 1650), evidently reporting this news, relates it thus: "They were mad when they came in, and sending to pursue, *cut off two hundred women and children!*" (*Cary*, ii. 218). The Rev. Denis Murphy, S.J., in his *Cromwell in Ireland* cites this passage, but alters "they paid dear" into "we paid dear," as if from an eye-witness.

Parliament voted "that the House doth approve the execution done at Drogheda, as an act both of justice to them and mercy to others who may be warned by it; and that the Council of State prepare a letter to be signed by the Speaker." Ludlow, Fairfax, Col. Hutchinson, Vane, White-locke, were members of the Council of State; Milton was its Secretary; Fairfax was Commander-in-Chief. Milton writes in his panegyric (*Defensio Secunda*): "*Tu, uno statim prælio Hibernicorum opes fregisti.*" Lucy Hutchinson calmly mentions "how Cromwell finished the conquest of Ireland," and seems to see in it only the hand of God.

CHAPTER IX

THE CAMPAIGN IN SCOTLAND—WORCESTER

A.D. 1650-1651. *ÆTAT.* 51-52

WAR between England and Scotland had long been imminent. When Cromwell returned from Ireland it became his immediate task. In June Charles landed in Scotland, and was proclaimed there king of the three kingdoms. The Kirk party which had defeated Montrose determined to support the Stuart on his taking the Covenant. They collected an army on the border, and inflamed the Scotch people against the Commonwealth. Underneath the ancient national quarrel lay the yet deeper quarrel of religion. The dominant party in Scotland were fanatical partisans of the most rigid form of Presbyterian orthodoxy. The chiefs of the English Commonwealth, who had suppressed Presbyterianism and monarchy together, were no less resolute to found a Bible freedom of Independency.

It is now useless to discuss whether the Scotch had given just cause for war; whether war between the two countries could be avoided by wisdom and moderation. Fairfax doubted if it were just, and the famous deputation which Cromwell headed failed to shake him. We officers, said the Lord-Lieutenant, desire to serve under

no other general. The Scotch have invaded us once, and give good cause to think they intend another invasion. War between us is unavoidable. Is it better to have this war in the bowels of another country or in our own? Cromwell was certainly in earnest; but no arguments could shake Fairfax; he resigned his commission, and never again took part in public affairs. The next day Cromwell was appointed Commander-in-Chief of all the forces raised and to be raised by authority of Parliament. Three days later he set out for the north, where an army of some 16,000 men had for some time been mustering.

The sudden advance of Cromwell, fresh from the bloody campaign in Ireland, struck dismay into the Scotch border. The preachers inveighed against him as a blasphemer, leading an army of plunderers and murderers. The country was laid bare and the male inhabitants withdrawn from the border up to Edinburgh. David Lesley, Cromwell's old comrade at Marston, a thorough soldier, trained in the wars of Gustavus, was put in command; his plan of campaign was to wear out the invader by avoiding battle, and cutting off his supplies. The English general crossed the border on 22d July, and advanced somewhat slowly along the coast, resting on his ships. The sternest discipline was enforced. Then began a long and characteristic duel of manifestoes and declarations, issued by the chiefs and preachers in each army. Both sides, with abundant quotations from Scripture, insisted that God was on their side. The Scotch maintained that the Commonwealth had broken the Covenant. The Cromwellians retorted that the Scotch Presbyterians were laying the seeds of perpetual

war by taking their grand enemy to their bosoms, and by engaging to restore him to his throne in England and Ireland. It was not so much a battle between two armies, as between two rival congregations in arms. Both sides intensely believed that God was with them, and His Word gave clear assurance that all their opponents should be utterly cast down. Never was national and religious animosity more fiercely kindled amongst men who had so much in common, and who were implicitly guided by the same Book. It was a religious war between two sects, each of which regarded the other as schismatics. Thus the English army entered Scotiand consumed with zeal to fight it out to the last man in defence of the Commonwealth, and "to live and die with their renowned general."

Some indecisive actions followed, where the great superiority of the English soldiers was manifest, and especially their strength in horse. Lesley doggedly refused battle, and fell back to a line resting on the coast between Edinburgh and Leith, with some 22,000 men. All through August Cromwell strove to force Lesley to a battle; but "he lay very strong," and could not be attacked in his positions. The weather was wet and stormy; provisions were failing; sickness disabled a tenth of the men; and the situation became indeed grave. From side to side the English general attempted to cut off the Scotch from their supplies, but the whole north and north-west lay open to them; Cromwell could not advance far from his base on the coast, and the ships could not lie in the Forth.

Unable to force the enemy to battle, he again betook himself to spiritual arms, and issued those two amazing

appeals—one to the Kirk and the other to their general. As in the midst of his Irish campaign he passionately inveighed against the Irish bishops, so now, invader in arms as he was, he laboriously argued with the godly men of the Kirk as with brothers in the Lord. “I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken.” Are you sure, he argues, that this your league with wicked and carnal men is a covenant of God? “I pray you read the twenty-eighth of Isaiah, from the fifth to the fifteenth verse. And do not scorn to know that it is the Spirit that quickens and giveth life.” And to General Lesley he writes: “That under pretence of the Covenant, a king should be taken in by you, to be imposed upon us”—a king who now has a Popish army fighting for and under him in Ireland, and who is surrounded by Malignants fighting and plotting for him in England and elsewhere. It does not appear that either side designed these declarations for their own men more than the enemy. Both profoundly believed their own cause; and if they did not think they could persuade the other, they could not understand how godly men could resist truth so plain and Scriptural.

Twice had Cromwell advanced upon the enemy, and twice he had retired baffled. His men were weary with marching, exhausted by the wet and storms, ill-fed, and reduced by disease, when, sullenly fighting, they fell back on Dunbar, 1st September. By a very skilful manœuvre Lesley passed his whole army round the retreating invader, planted himself to the south of him securely on the Lammermuir Hills, and occupied with a strong guard the pass which was the key of the road to

England. Cromwell's position was now very critical. He had scarcely 11,000 men left under arms : and these, as one of them wrote, "a poor, scattered, hungry, discouraged army." The enemy, just double his number, was placed on a strong range of hills between him and his own country, and had occupied the only road by the sea along which he could retreat across the border. His whole force lay on a small promontory jutting out into the Northern Sea, with no other base than his ships. He saw the danger fully ; and on the 2d of September he wrote thus privately to warn Sir Arthur Haselrig, the Governor of Newcastle :—

"We are upon an engagement very difficult. The enemy hath blocked up our way at the pass at Cockburnspath, through which we cannot get almost without a miracle. He lieth so upon the hills that we know not how to come that way without great difficulty ; and our lying here daily consumeth our men, who fall sick beyond imagination." Then he warns the governor to provide against a catastrophe, to get together what forces he can, to send to friends in the south, to inform Sir H. Vane, but not to make it public. "*Whatever becomes of us*, it will be well for you to get what forces you can together ; and the south to help what they can. The business nearly concerneth all good people." But he goes on : "All shall work for good. Our spirits are comfortable, praised be the Lord ! though our present condition be as it is."

With such foresight Oliver faced a great peril, that it might not lead to the ruin of the Commonwealth. As Harvey, one of his attendants, writes : "He was a strong man, in the dark perils of war, in the high places of the field ; hope shone in him like a pillar of fire, when it had gone out in all the others."

Cromwell's position was "very difficult," as he said,

but not desperate. He was not yet driven to embark either men or guns. A battle would give him victory; and one mistake of the enemy would secure him his battle. That mistake at last Lesley made. Either forced by the Kirk committee and the influence of the preachers over his men, or urged on to crush the invader at one blow, he began to draw down his army towards the shore. That very afternoon, 2d September, Cromwell, walking with Lambert, noticed the change of position; how the enemy's right wing had descended into the plain. "The Lord hath delivered them into our hand!" was the cry of Cromwell, as vague tradition relates. This he thought, if he did not utter the words; Lambert and Monk were of the same mind, and so were other officers. That night a plan of battle was drawn up, the formations made, and leaders were chosen for each line. Lesley had drawn down his wing to the coast, hoping to surround and crush the English, in the act, as he supposed, of embarking his men. Cromwell's design was to hold the main Scotch army with his big guns, whilst he fell suddenly with his best troops on Lesley's right wing, and so to roll it back upon its centre. The night was wild and wet; the moon covered with clouds. The English lay partly in tents; the Scotch on the open hillside, crouched for shelter in the soaked shocks of corn. Both armies rested beside their arms, waiting eagerly for dawn; and on both sides many gathered in companies, and prayed aloud and for the last time to the God of Battles.

At four in the morning by the light of the moon the English began to move. Two hours were spent in the sodden fields in completing their formation. Then they

advanced to the charge with the word that day : *The Lord of Hosts*. For some time the dispute was hot and stiff. The cannons roared against the main line of the Scotch army, still posted on its hill, and unable to deploy freely across the brook and ravine in their front. At first their right wing in the plain drove back the English troopers across the brook, where it opens out towards the sea. But, supported by the foot which now advanced, and aided by Cromwell's favourite resource of a flank charge of cavalry, they returned to the assault and drove back the enemy, both horse and foot. "After the first repulse," runs the general's despatch, "they were made by the Lord of Hosts as stubble to their swords." "The best of the Scotch horse being broken through and through in less than an hour's dispute, their whole army being put to confusion, it became a total rout ; our men having the chase and execution of them near eight miles." The right wing of Lesley was alone the free part of his army. It had been outmatched and utterly crushed in less than an hour by Cromwell's main force. Three thousand of the Scotch were cut down in the first onset. "They run ! I profess they run !" cried Oliver as he watched the charge. The main body of the Scotch being planted on a hillside, and behind a deep brook that ran in a ravine between them and the enemy, had long been pounded by Cromwell's cannon without being able to deploy. As at last they descended the hill to support their right wing, it dashed in upon them in its flight, the horsemen in panic riding down their supports. The whole army broke and dispersed, flying in all directions : some south, some north.

Just then over the eastern ocean burst the first gleam

of the sun through the morning mist. And above the roar of the battle was heard the voice of the general: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered." Then, as the whole Scotch army fled in wild confusion, "the Lord-General made a halt," steadying his men and firing them afresh for the pursuit: he sang the 117th Psalm: "O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people. For his merciful kindness is great towards us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord."

Such was Dunbar battle on Cromwell's great day. The overthrow had been complete. Three thousand dead lay on the field; thousands fell in the chase; 10,000 prisoners were taken; the whole baggage and train, all the artillery, great and small; 15,000 stand of arms, 200 colours. On the part of the victors, but two officers and twenty men had fallen. It is seldom that war sees a victory so rapid, so overwhelming, and so wholly one-sided.

The Scotch were brave and hardy soldiers, adequately equipped, fired with religious enthusiasm, and twice as numerous as the English. They were at home, resting on their capital, well provisioned, and led by a very experienced soldier, who had baffled Cromwell for six weeks. But the bulk of their men were raw, unorganised levies; the great majority of the officers were without any training, and the preachers had far more authority than the officers. The Scotch host was rather a church than an army. Cromwell's army from first to last was a perfect body of warriors—generals, officers, horse, and foot; unsurpassed in courage, skill in arms, in discipline, and in *morale*. The campaign had been one to try the

best troops ; and they had never wavered before disease, hunger, or fatigue. Cromwell, if not one of the great masters of strategy, was certainly a consummate leader on the field of battle. His tactics on the day of Dunbar were as complete as those of Lesley were faulty. His men were troops never surpassed as soldiers, stirred with the energy of martyrs : they were led that day with all the insight and the swoop that mark a great commander.

It is another and more complex question whether Cromwell had shown strategic skill in the campaign. Till the day of Dunbar his campaign had been barely a success. He had no base but his ships, a doubtful resource in such a season and on such a coast ; and he made three marches, at least, exposed to singular risk. But before we can judge them to be military blunders we must remember that he was sure of himself—sure of his men. He knew that they were consummate soldiers, facing ill-trained levies. He knew that one hour of battle would decide the campaign, and he acted as so many great generals have acted when, trusting in their own star, and knowing that they led unconquered veterans against a rude militia, they have broken every rule of warfare and plucked victory out of extreme peril. So Hannibal at Cannæ, manœuvring in the plain with a smaller but trained army, had drawn down the larger host of the Romans from their hills, turned suddenly upon them, and crushed them in one awful ruin. There too, till the hour of battle, the victor seemed baffled and hemmed in ; there too the defeated army was ruined by pride, self-will, faction, and patriotic rhetoric ; and there also it was seen that a great general at the head of a veteran army can outmatch any odds ; nay, the courage

and enthusiasm of a brave people fighting for their altars and their homes.

The next day Cromwell sent on Lambert to occupy Edinburgh, himself remaining at Dunbar, much embarrassed with his prisoners. Five thousand sick or feeble men he sent away: 5000 others were despatched to England, where they died like flies. That day he wrote to his wife a few words of affection, adding that he was growing an old man, and felt the infirmities of age marvellously stealing upon him. And he found time in the midst of the campaign to write many other letters to his family and friends. Disaster had broken up the Scotch into several parties. The king, with a new army, was holding out in the Highlands, resting on Perth and Stirling. Cromwell, with his generals, occupied the country south of the Forth, and thence to the Clyde. Long exhortations and wrestlings in spirit, blasts and counter-blasts, passed between the chiefs of the two nations; unceasing efforts were made to reassure the inhabitants; and gradually the bulk of the southern population became accustomed to the firm and moderate rule of Cromwell. On the 1st of January 1651 Charles II. was crowned king at Scone; and gradually withdrawing himself from the Kirk, he gathered an army of the old Royalist type.

The winter was severe, and Cromwell failed to shake the royal army at Stirling. In one of these expeditions, early in February, the general was seized with his old enemy—ague. He had a severe attack in March 1648; others in Ireland in 1649-50; now a third in less than a year. It fell on him in three successive relapses, endangering his life, breaking his constitution, and paraly-

ing his activity until June. "I thought I should have died of this fit of sickness," he writes to the Council of State, "but the Lord seemeth to dispose otherwise." And to his wife he writes: "In these hopes I wait, and am not without expectation of a gracious return. Pray for me. . . . Truly I am not able as yet to write much. I am weary; and rest, thine." He still, in the intervals of his sickness, marches and gives orders, argues, prays, and preaches, at least as eager to convince as to conquer his misguided Presbyterian brethren. "I shall not need," he writes to the Council, "to recite the extremity of my last sickness: it was so violent that, indeed, my nature was not able to bear the weight thereof. But the Lord was pleased to deliver me, beyond expectation; and to give me cause to say once more, 'He hath plucked me out of the grave!'" So he had written to Fairfax, in his sickness of 1648: "I received in myself the sentence of death, that I might learn to trust in Him that raiseth from the dead, and have no confidence in the flesh. It's a blessed thing to die daily."

His life was saved, but his health was visibly shaken. It was observed that he had grown an old man. And the warning was not lost on him. No portion of his career is more full than is this Scotch campaign of affectionate communings with his family and intimates, meditations on the will of God, and kindly dealing with all with whom he came into personal contact. Cromwell resumed the field in June; and after fruitless attempts to take or surround Stirling, he boldly crossed the Forth into Fife, designing to cut off the Royalist communication. A successful engagement by Lambert, where the Scotch lost 2000 men, gave him a firm hold north of the

Forth. He passed across it himself with his main force, and placed himself between Stirling and Perth—which latter surrendered after one day's siege.

The success of Cromwell in his rear, and divisions in his own followers, drove Charles to the desperate adventure with which the long struggle closed. At the end of July he suddenly broke up his camp at Stirling, and made a dash for England by way of Carlisle and the north-western counties. Such an adventure had been talked of and even expected by the Council since the beginning of the year. It was entirely in the reckless spirit of the overweening cavaliers; and Charles had long been withdrawing from the Presbyterians and the politicians to place himself in the hands of the Royalist soldiers. Cromwell heard of the march as he lay before Perth; it is plain with neither surprise nor alarm. There is every reason to believe that he deliberately opened the way for it by marching upon Perth whilst he left the south open. At least, he accepted the alternative either of driving Charles into the western Highlands, or of leaving him free to dash upon his ruin in England. And of the two Cromwell much preferred the last.

The danger was far more apparent than real. It was hardly more serious than the raid of his young kinsman to Derby a hundred years later. There were ample forces to hold and to surround Charles, and little risk of his rousing a new war in England. Cromwell left a garrison in Perth, sent Monk with 6000 men to reduce Stirling and to maintain Scotland, and himself with his main army hastened back across the border by way of Berwick—

“Resolving,” he writes, “to make what speed we can up to the enemy,—who, in his desperation and fear, and out of

inevitable necessity, is run to try what he can do this way. I do apprehend that if he goes for England, being some few days' march before us, it will trouble some men's thoughts ; and may occasion some inconveniences." He then explains that the present campaign will end the war, and avoid another winter in Scotland. "The Lord," he adds, "will make the desperateness of this counsel of theirs to appear, and the folly of it also. When England was much more unsteady than now ; and when a much more considerable army of theirs, unfoiled, invaded you ; and we had but a weak force to make resistance at Preston—upon deliberate advice, we chose rather to put ourselves between their army and Scotland : and how that succeeded is not well to be forgotten ! *This* is not out of choice on our part, but by some kind of necessity ; and it is to be hoped will have the like issue."

General Harrison, with a strong body of horse on the border, was ordered to hang on the enemy's flank. Lambert, with the main body of the cavalry, was pushed on to follow up his rear. Levies were summoned on many sides, the towns were defended by volunteers, and Cromwell's main army followed with the utmost rapidity.

Charles marched on through Cumberland and Lancashire with a jaded army, some 12,000 strong, summoning towns and calling for recruits ; but he met no response. Lord Derby raised a force to join him, but it was cut to pieces by Lilburne ; the towns resisted ; the country-people flew at his approach, driving off their cattle ; Fairfax raised his men in Yorkshire ; Colonel Hutchinson in Nottingham ; and by the time the king had reached Shropshire, Lambert and Harrison faced him with an equal body of soldiers far better than his own. The Council of State worked night and day with extraordinary energy ; county militias were everywhere mustering ; and Charles, baffled and disheartened, turned to the

south-west to Worcester. Here, towards the end of August, Cromwell arrived. He had marched from Perth in little more than three weeks, and found himself in command of more than 30,000 men. Charles was now brought to bay. His men were exhausted by their march in a hostile country, and were circled round with enemies. "We have one stout argument, despair," wrote the Duke of Hamilton; "for we must now either stoutly fight it or die." Cromwell had before him the last cavalier army, which his own troops outnumbered nearly three to one. The Civil War was about to close.

Charles held at Worcester a very strong position. The city was stoutly fortified; it lay on the left or eastern bank of the Severn, a little above the point where the Teme flows into it from the west. A strong fort on a steep hill in advance of the walls defended the city on its south-eastern angle, and a bridge connected it with a suburb on the right, or western, bank of the Severn. Charles posted his main force in the triangle formed by the two rivers, using the city and its outworks as a powerful *tête-de-pont*, or entrenched camp, whence, behind strong walls and on the inner line, his troops could quickly operate, now on the right, now on the left side of the Severn. He broke up the bridge over the Severn at Upton lower down, and occupied in force the bridge over the Teme. There, *à-cheval* on two rivers, and in the triangle between them, the Royalist army stood at bay.

Cromwell appeared before Worcester on the 28th of August. Having an overwhelming force, he was able to divide his army in two sections, and to attack on both sides of the Severn with two forces, each outnumbering

the enemy. He himself fortified the hill on the eastern side of the river, and from his batteries cannonaded the city. Fleetwood was despatched down the Severn, which, with great spirit, he crossed on the broken bridge, wounded Massey, the Royalist general, drove back the Scotch on to the Teme, and planted himself firmly on the western bank of the Severn. From the 28th of August till 3d of September the batteries played on the city, the works drawing closer round it, and the besieged continually giving ground. At dawn on the 3d of September—his fortunate day—Cromwell ordered his final assault. "This day twelvemonth," runs a despatch, "was glorious at Dunbar, this day hath been glorious at Worcester. The word then was '*The Lord of Hosts*,' and so it was now; and indeed the Lord of Hosts was wonderfully with us."

Fleetwood began the day with assailing the Scots on the Teme, Cromwell aiding with a force from the other bank, and between them they succeeded in building two bridges of boats close together; one across Severn, the other across Teme. The triangle thus lost its two river defences. Fleetwood poured into it across the Teme from Upton, and Cromwell, heading the van in person, poured into it across the Severn. The Scotch were driven back from one defence to another, fighting desperately; but they had been taken in flank, and were completely overpowered by the forces converging upon them from both armies. The king, who watched the fight from the tower of the Cathedral, hastily withdrew his men across Severn bridge into the city; and at once commenced a skilful and vigorous manœuvre. It was now afternoon: the city was still unbroken, and

a large part of the Royalist army was safe behind its walls. Suddenly dashing out from the south-eastern gates upon the remnant of Cromwell's army left on the left bank of the Severn, Charles, at the head of his cavalry, broke a regiment of foot and began to force back the weakened wing. Oliver, instantly perceiving the change of battle, galloped over the bridge of boats back to the troops he had left, passed over again his foot and horse, and fell upon the royal forces. These were quickly driven in, fighting desperately from point to point into the now closing shades of evening. Fort Royal, disdain- ing to yield to Cromwell's summons, was stormed, and all within it put to the sword. By eight o'clock the city gates were forced, and pell-mell the flying and the pursuers burst into the crowded streets. There a fearful carnage ensued. Fighting went on from street to street far into the night; and the city was delivered over to pillage. The overthrow was complete. Three thousand dead Scots lay on the field: 10,000 prisoners were taken. The remnant of the fugitives were cut down in the retreat; Hamilton, Derby, Massey, Lauderdale, Lesley, and all the leaders were taken prisoners. "My Lord-General did exceedingly hazard himself, riding up and down in the midst of the fire." It was "as stiff a contest for four or five hours as ever I have seen." The loss of the victors was under 200 men. "The dimensions of this mercy," wrote Cromwell to the Speaker, "are above my thoughts. It is, for aught I know, a crowning mercy." And then he breaks forth in the very hour of victory, as at Dunbar, as at Drogheda, as at Naseby, to impress on Parliament the great lessons which this mercy appeared to him to teach.

Cromwell was right. The Royalist cause was utterly crushed out at Worcester. He never again appeared in the field; and during his lifetime the sword was not drawn again in England.

In many respects this last campaign differs much from all that went before it. In the month that elapsed, from 3d August to the 3d of September, the army that fought at Dunbar had marched 300 miles. New armies had been mustered in many counties, equipped, supplied, and made to converge by a common plan, had first controlled the Royalist invaders and then had hemmed them in, as in a circle of iron. Not a single scheme miscarried; and from the hour that Charles crossed the border he had never had a chance. And so too the battle of Worcester was far more complex than any which Cromwell had hitherto fought. The operations in which it culminated were carried on continuously for a whole week. The simultaneous attack on both sides of the city, and the advance along both sides of two rivers, was a very complex manœuvre. To build two bridges of boats in mid-battle, to pass an army twice across a rapid river in the same engagement and within a few hours, is a bold and difficult achievement. It demanded in the troops an alertness and precision of discipline; in their officers experience and skill; and in their commander a consummate mastery of his resources and confidence in his men. It was fully justified by success. Not a single combination broke down. And this singular and complex battle would alone suffice to place the name of Cromwell high in the rank of tacticians, unless we judge his own impetuous courage to savour too much of the general of division.

Here Cromwell, at the age of fifty-two, sheathed the sword which he had girt on at the age of forty-three. To judge by the test of success, few generals have ever done more. Not only did he never command in any battle that did not result in utter ruin to his enemy, but no single operation of war that he ever undertook had failed. With some 15,000 men he practically reconquered Ireland in nine months; with a little larger force he subdued Scotland in about a year. At Marston and at Naseby he had converted a losing battle into an overwhelming victory. At Basing, at Drogheda, at Worcester, he stormed strong places, desperately defended, in a few hours of fighting and with very moderate loss. At Preston, with a loss of 50 men, he annihilated a brave army of 24,000 men; at Dunbar, with a smaller loss, he annihilated another brave army of 22,000; at Worcester, with a loss of under 200, he overwhelmed an army of 15,000 men. He never fared so well, he said, as when the enemy were two to one. Except at Worcester, he always fought against great odds. Every one of his victories was won in the least time and with the smallest loss. It is true that he was never opposed to an army at all equal in discipline to his own. But then the discipline, the *morale*, the organisation were all his work. He had created a regular army, and had trained it to become as perfect an instrument of war as history records. And thus, if we judge by results and the standard of his age, Oliver Cromwell stands out as thoroughly successful in strategy and as a general in the field such as our history records but one or two.

CHAPTER X

THE UNOFFICIAL DICTATORSHIP

A.D. 1651-1653. *ÆTAT.* 52-54

As the Second Civil War, leading up to the death of the king, had left Cromwell the foremost man in the nation in all but style and office, so he returned from the conquest of Ireland and Scotland, and the final overthrow of the royal cause at Worcester, invested with an undefined but semi-official dictatorship.

Parliament received the news of the victory with a spasm of relief and unbounded enthusiasm, and made the return of the Lord-General one long triumphal progress. A deputation from the House met him at Aylesbury; from Acton, the Speaker, the Lord Mayor, sheriffs, and a great assemblage of members and civic officials, conducted him in state to London with coaches, body-guard, salvoes of artillery, and shouts of the crowd. He received the thanks of the House, an additional grant of £4000 a year, and the use of Hampton Court as a residence. Thereby he was recognised by what remained of legal authority as practically dictator.

He was now at the height of his power and prestige; and even Hugh Peters thought that he would make himself king. This, then, was the moment when a

Bonaparte would have seized the vacant throne. Cromwell made no such use of the immense ascendancy which Drogheda, Dunbar, and Worcester had added to the office of Commander-in-Chief. It was remarked that he carried himself with affability and modesty, and he betook himself to work as a simple member of the Council. There he laboured assiduously for nineteen months; nor on any single occasion did he bring himself conspicuously before the nation. His biographers have found it hard to ascertain how, during this period, his energies were employed. The history of his work is to be sought for in the records of the Council of State, and its manifold commissions and departments. He served on the standing committees of the Ordnance, of the Admiralty, of Trade and Foreign affairs, of Law, of the affairs of Ireland and Scotland, of the Dutch question, beside many other subsidiary committees for special matters. Of the army he was already the chief by Act of Parliament. Thus legally in control of the whole military forces, with paramount voice in the civil service, at once Captain-General and semi-official dictator, Oliver worked on at the administrative business of the nation. But he worked without display, accepting the shadowy authority of the remnant or fag-end of the Long Parliament. It was only after an anxious interval of abortive attempts at a settled government that he began to take independent action.

Nineteen months elapsed after Worcester fight before he closed the Long Parliament: it was two years and three months before he was named Protector.

The situation was that which inevitably succeeds a violent and successful revolution. The whole fabric of

the body politic and social, had been shaken to its roots; the peril which had given the Commonwealth its cohesion and mighty force was at an end; and the various elements of which that force was composed were now free to insist on their differences. We may assume that the majority of the nation did not desire a permanent Commonwealth; that the Royalist party represented ideas and institutions to which Englishmen were destined to cling for generations, and even for centuries to come. On the other hand, the Commonwealth party, by their convictions, character, and organisation, by their superior weight of every sort, possessed an enormous predominance in effective strength.

The backbone of that Commonwealth party was the army—an army which consisted not of mercenaries or conscripts, but which was the flower of the people; men who were, and knew themselves to be, the natural leaders of their countrymen. They were at once an army made up of trained politicians, and a party made up of unconquered veterans. Rarely, indeed, in history has moral and material force been thus concentrated in a body, possessing both intense political conviction and consummate military discipline. They were the passion, the courage, the conscience of the people in arms; a political group, in energy and will stronger than all other groups together; a corps of soldiers who had no equals in Europe. They had none of the vices of an army; none of the restlessness of a political faction. Their political ideas were few, but very definite, and held with intense tenacity: religious freedom, orderly government, and the final abolition of the abuses for which Laud and Charles had died. In religion they were mainly Inde-

pendents, seeking the widest liberty for themselves and others. Their wishes as soldiers were for peace, to return to their homes and to civil life. Devoted to their great chief, and profoundly trusting his honesty and wisdom, they maintained unbroken discipline within as well as without their body, leaving affairs of State to him and to his council of officers.

Parliament, or the thin residuum of the House of Commons which claimed that name, practically consisted of a junto of men who, after so many expulsions, purges, and abstentions of all sorts, continued to meet, to the average number of fifty, occasionally reaching a little more than one hundred. In spite of frequent siftings, the House was constantly gravitating back into the hands of lawyers and Presbyterians. The Council of State—of forty-one members, almost all members of Parliament—was only a committee of the House, where soldiers and administrators had predominant influence, and which virtually governed the nation. Cromwell, his officers, and a few men of action practically directed the Council. But it was far too large for an efficient cabinet; it was divided by very contrary views; and its activity was constantly impeded by the House which had appointed it.

It is fortunate that in our English revolution it is in no way necessary to disparage one set of men in order to do justice to their opponents. Both House and Council contained many men of great ability and character. Some of the stoutest and purest spirits in our history were in their number. There were indefatigable men of business, excellent administrators, keen and subtle brains, and above all, sterling honesty and excellent sense amongst them. In one or two there was a real

vein of heroism and of sagacity. Still there was but one statesman of consummate genius; and that fact many of them were slow to recognise.

Cromwell, now inwardly assured that he had been called by God and by all good men to take the foremost place, stood apart from all the various sections by reason of his far wider grasp of the whole situation and his constructive and organising instinct. In his official despatch after the victory at Dunbar (4th September 1650) he had broken out to the Speaker with the abrupt appeal: "Relieve the oppressed, hear the groans of poor prisoners in England. Be pleased to reform the abuses of all professions:—and if there be any one such that makes many poor to make a few rich, that suits not a Commonwealth." So now on the morrow of Worcester (4th September 1651) he again implored the House that "justice and righteousness, mercy and truth, may flow from you, as a thankful return to our gracious God."

Always strongly conservative, he set his face steadily towards "a settlement of this nation." Always zealous for social order, he looked directly for the mending of practical wrongs. The state of the Church, the state of the law, the manifold grievances and sufferings of men on all sides, and the confusion of all institutions and authorities, filled him with horror and pity. Everything in Church and State was alike provisional and chaotic. The scanty oligarchy which clung to the bare name of Parliament—a Parliament which had been summoned by King Charles eleven years ago—never could be accepted by the nation as its genuine representative in the great change of government. The Episcopal Church was

suppressed, yet the Presbyterian Church was not set up on any permanent or complete basis. The House continually and fitfully interfered in religious questions, from the point of view of rigid Presbyterian orthodoxy. The Royalists were still harried with the most crushing exactions, and held everything on sufferance. The relations with foreign countries were precarious, and with the Dutch they were hostile.

The law in especial manner was in a state of chaos. There were 23,000 unheard cases waiting in Chancery ; and this was a perpetual grievance both to the general and his soldiers. It might surprise us to find the army and its chief so constantly troubled about the abuses of the law, did we not remember that the Civil War was the turning-point in the history of English law ; that it shattered the whole system of feudal tenure, and with the Restoration we find the land law mainly what it continued to be down to the present century. The period of transition was a time of chaos and injustice, and Cromwell and his Ironsides were men to whom social injustice and official tyranny never appealed in vain. But, besides the law, practical questions had to be solved. An army of 50,000 men had to be reduced to one-half. A mass of diseased and wretched prisoners had to be disposed of ; the fortresses and castles dismantled, reduced, or repaired. Ireland and Scotland had to be brought into permanent settlement. In one word, a nation which had been torn by ten years of desperate civil war, and of which every institution had been passing through a crisis, lay waiting for order, settlement, and reorganisation.

The difficulties were all grouped round two great

questions: "the settlement of the nation" and a "new representative"; or, as we should now say, a permanent constitution and a new Parliament. Without the former, Cromwell saw, everything remained an open question; no man could feel secure, and peace would never begin. Without the latter, no reform was possible in Church, law, taxation, or in legal or civil reorganisation. The Council of State and its commissions sufficed for daily administration. The army, the navy, the ordnance, Ireland and Scotland, and the treasury, were managed with energy and skill. But in order to settle ecclesiastical and legal questions, to close the system of confiscation, and to return to regular government, legislation was necessary. And for practical legislation the House was incompetent. The lawyers, the Presbyterians, the reactionists, and the pedants debated each Bill for months. The House drifted into a permanent attitude of reaction; by turns learned, loquacious, impracticable, self-important, and bigoted.

Cromwell was bent on a "settlement," the difficulties of which he clearly saw. He showed such a willingness to come to terms with the defeated party, and such real sympathy with their protracted sufferings, that the sterner spirits at once accused him of gaining the goodwill of the Royalists to serve his own designs. He plainly saw that the nation was not prepared for a definite republic; nor had he himself any preference for it. He also saw, as the lawyers continually showed him, that without some monarchical element, the English constitution, the English scheme of government and of law, could scarcely be got into work again. For

a reorganisation of the body politic, as distinct from its complete transformation, a person as ruler was essential. Cromwell was profoundly convinced of this; and as a matter of law and of history he was plainly right. The difficulties were, however, not slight. The army and the zealous Puritans were against the very name of king, and especially averse to any prince of the late king's house. The lawyers, on the other hand, could not conceive of the monarchical element in any other form. Cromwell's own mind inclined towards a personal head of the State, though he still shrunk from the name of king.

Nothing can be plainer than this, that his whole soul rejected the idea of a mere Parliamentary executive: government vested in a single elective chamber. By character, from experience, and by conviction, he was rooted to the idea of a double authority: a person permanently charged with the executive, and a co-ordinate elected legislature. The whole future history of England lay in this struggle,—the alternative of the American system with its distinct personal executive, or the modern British system of a single supreme Parliament having the executive as a part and creature of itself. After many fluctuations and an irregular epoch of oligarchy, the Parliamentary system of government triumphed; and for a century at least it has kept undisputed ascendancy. But it is not proved thereby that Cromwell was wrong.

The struggle between Cromwell and the House was on neither side a question of personal ambition. It was a struggle between two far-reaching principles of government; the struggle as to whether executive authority

shall be subordinate to, or co-ordinate with, the legislature. It was at bottom the same principle which, under very various forms and with very different aims, great English statesmen have more or less asserted—Elizabeth, Strafford, Cromwell, William III., Walpole, and Chatham; and which the founders of the American constitution successfully worked out across the Atlantic. Parliamentary executive is still the great problem of our time. After Worcester it presented itself for the first time in our history; claiming to be a permanent and dominant institution. Within a few days of Cromwell's return, the question of the new Parliament was raised, evidently at his desire. For three months the question was revived and pressed, until, at last, after repeated divisions and debates, the House was induced, by a majority of two, to vote its dissolution. This it fixed for a date three years distant, 3d November 1654. But in the meantime many things were to happen.

Around the great question at issue between Cromwell and the House, the minor questions were grouped. Cromwell and the army clung to entire freedom of worship; the House to Presbyterian orthodoxy. Cromwell now felt himself to be in the higher sense the representative of the nation, the guardian of the interests of all, even of those he had defeated. The Parliament men, filled with pride in their successful revolution, could not see that the time had come for putting an end to revolution. Cromwell insisted on an amnesty and on closing the system of confiscation; the House would not resign the revolutionary expedient of raising supplies. Cromwell's strength

rested on the army ; the House sought to reduce it in order to strengthen the navy. Mainly for political objects, Vane and his party plunged into the Dutch war. Cromwell and his soldiers were for making a short cut to practical reforms ; the House, with its lawyers and officials, saw obstacles and dangers in every reform. As the army trusted its cause to Cromwell, so the House was represented by Vane, its most eminent leader, a man as heroic and generous as Cromwell himself, of varied capacity and unwearied energy. Both Cromwell and Vane represented parties who had borne the heat and burden of the day, and who had done great things for the common cause, the one in the field, the other in council. Neither party could claim the majority of the nation ; perhaps both together could not claim it. Parliament, now alike unpopular and incompetent, had nothing but a shred of legal right. But Cromwell wielded overwhelming force, and embodied the hopes and the trust of the best men.

Immediately on his return from Worcester, Cromwell found himself addressed by petitions for the redress of grievances, in the matter of law, of imprisonment, of exactions, of tithes, as to one, said the petitioners, into whose hands the sword was put. And commissions were actually issued to officers to hear and determine civil cases, which gave great satisfaction to the parties. The Lord-General was thus passing by consent into the position of general Moderator. It was at this time that Whitelocke places the famous discussion he records as to the settlement of the nation. Cromwell, he says, desired a meeting between the leaders in Parliament and the chiefs of the army. There he very plainly

stated the issue thus: whether a republic or a mixed monarchical government will be best; and if anything monarchical, then in whom that power should be placed? The lawyers were for a mixed monarchy; the generals for a republic. "The laws of England are so interwoven with the power and practice of a monarchy," said Whitelocke, "that to settle a government without something of monarchy in it" would lead to incalculable inconveniences. He and others evidently inclined to a restoration of one of the Stuart princes. The generals asked why not a republic as well as other nations? Cromwell, it is clear, objected to any recall of the princes; but he thought "that a settlement of somewhat with monarchical power in it would be very effectual." It is plain that from this time he gave it to be understood that he desired a settlement with himself invested with some monarchical power; though, as to the name or prerogative of king, he felt and continued to feel the deepest hesitation and doubt.

The question was indeed one of extraordinary complication and difficulty. Legally speaking, the whole fabric of the body politic, the daily routine of law and of administration, centred in the name and authority of the king. A king *de facto*, with or without hereditary right, even a usurper, fulfilled the legal conditions. By a statute of Henry VII. acts done under the authority of a *de facto* king, even a usurper, were not acts of treason. But without a *de facto* king, the old system of law and order would have to be remodelled from its base. Between the Puritan chiefs and the royal house an indelible bar seemed set. One might be a lawful king, who had conquered his throne by the sword or had been

called in by Parliament; but a king without trace of royal blood was undreamed of in England. The gulf that separated the most absolute military ruler from the same man regularly proclaimed king was immense—legally, morally, and socially. But then what would bring soldiers like Harrison, politicians like Vane, to acquiesce in the proclamation of *Oliver Rex*? The problem was perhaps insoluble. In the meantime Cromwell worked towards a settlement to have in it somewhat of a monarchical power, and left the issue to time.

All through the year 1652 the struggle went on, Cromwell and his officers continually pressing the House to complete the reforms and settle a new Parliament; the House eternally debating, obstinately bent on retaining its legal autocracy. The story of the contest was told by Oliver most truthfully and simply in his public speeches. He and his soldiers were resolved, he said, that the nation should reap the fruit of all the blood and treasure that had been spent in the cause. The officers had begun by private appeals to the House: in August they presented a petition embodying their demands—provision for preaching the Gospel, removal of scandalous ministers, reform of the law, redress of abuses in excise, in tithes, in the treasury, and lastly, provision for a new Parliament. They got no answer but a few words. Then, “finding the People dissatisfied in every corner of the nation, and laying at our doors the non-performance of these things,” Cromwell declares that he called a series of meetings between the leaders in Parliament and the chiefs of the army. Ten or twelve such meetings were held without result.

In November Cromwell met Whitelocke, and asked him "to consider the dangerous condition we are all in." The members of Parliament, he said, were become odious to the army for their pride and ambition and self-seeking, their delays of business and their design to perpetuate themselves to continue the power in their hands, for their meddling in private matters, for their injustice and partiality, and the scandalous lives of some of the chief of them. People open their mouths against them, he said; and they cannot be kept within bounds of justice and law or reason, for there is none superior or co-ordinate with them. "What," said he abruptly, "if a man should take upon him to be king?" Whitelocke implored him to consider the danger and the evil, and urged a compromise with Charles Stuart. "That," said Cromwell, "is a matter of so high importance and difficulty, that it deserves more of consideration and debate."

The House, led by Vane, now altered its tactics, and began to press on a Bill for a new representation, a plan which, with much parade of free election, was simply a scheme to perpetuate themselves. The existing members were to sit without re-election, and were to form an exclusive tribunal for admitting new members. It was a transparent artifice to continue themselves, whilst adding such additional members as they might approve. Cromwell thereupon called another conference at his own house. Some twenty-three members attended on the 19th April 1653. There he and the generals told the Parliament men clearly that they would not suffer them to pass such an Act. They proposed as an alternative a temporary commission of forty leading men to summon

a new Parliament. The sitting ended late at night without decision; it was agreed to meet the next day, with an understanding that in the meantime the Act should not be passed.

The next day the conference was renewed at Cromwell's lodgings. There news was brought that the House was hastily passing the obnoxious measure. Presently Colonel Ingoldsby came in from the House to tell the general that not a moment was to be lost, if he meant to do anything. Furious at what he believed, perhaps without reason, to be the bad faith of Vane and the leaders, he called a company of musketeers to attend him, and with Lambert and other officers, strode silently to the House. In plain black clothes and gray worsted stockings, the Lord-General came in quietly and took his seat, as Vane was pressing the House to pass the dissolution Bill without delay and without the customary forms. He beckoned to Harrison and told him that the Parliament was ripe for dissolution, and he must do it. "Sir," said Harrison, "the work is very great and dangerous."—"You say well," said the general, and thereupon sat still for about a quarter of an hour. Vane sat down, and the Speaker was putting the question for passing the Bill. Then said Cromwell to Harrison again, "This is the time; I must do it." He rose up, put off his hat, and spoke.

Beginning moderately and respectfully, he presently changed his style, told them of their injustice, delays of justice, self-interest, and other faults; charging them not to have a heart to do anything for the public good, to have espoused the corrupt interest of Presbytery and the lawyers, who were the supporters of tyranny and

oppression, accusing them of an intention to perpetuate themselves in power. And rising into passion, "as if he were distracted," he told them that the Lord had done with them, and had chosen other instruments for the carrying on His work that were worthy. Sir Peter Wentworth rose to complain of such language in Parliament, coming from their own trusted servant. Roused to fury by the interruption, Cromwell left his seat, clapped on his hat, walked up and down the floor of the House, stamping with his feet, and cried out, "You are no Parliament, I say you are no Parliament. Come, come, we have had enough of this; I will put an end to your prating. Call them in!" Twenty or thirty musketeers under Colonel Worsley marched in on to the floor of the House. The rest of the guard were placed at the door and in the lobby.

Vane from his place cried out, "This is not honest, yea, it is against morality and common honesty." Cromwell, who evidently regarded Vane as the breaker of the supposed agreement, turned on him with a loud voice, crying, "O Sir Henry Vane, Sir Henry Vane, the Lord deliver me from Sir Henry Vane." Then looking upon one of the members, he said, "There sits a drunkard;" to another he said, "Some of you are unjust, corrupt persons, and scandalous to the profession of the Gospel." "Some are whoremasters," he said, looking at Wentworth and Marten. Going up to the table, he said, "What shall we do with this Bauble? Here take it away!" and gave it to a musketeer. "Fetch him down," he cried to Harrison, pointing to the Speaker. Lenthall sat still, and refused to come down unless by force. "Sir," said Harrison, "I will lend you my hand,"

and putting his hand within his, the Speaker came down. Algernon Sidney sat still in his place. "Put him out," said Cromwell. And Harrison and Worsley put their hands on his shoulders, and he rose and went out. The members went out, fifty-three in all, Cromwell still calling aloud. To Vane he said that he might have prevented this; but that he was a juggler and had not common honesty. "It is you," he said, as they passed him, "that have forced me to do this, for I have sought the Lord night and day, that He would rather slay me than put me on the doing of this work." He snatched the Bill of dissolution from the hand of the clerk, put it under his cloak, seized on the records, ordered the guard to clear the House of all members, and to have the door locked, and went away to Whitehall.

Such is one of the most famous scenes in our history, that which of all other things has most heavily weighed on the fame of Cromwell. In truth it is a matter of no small complexity, which neither constitutional eloquence nor boisterous sarcasm has quite adequately unravelled. Both in essence and in form much may be said on both sides. Perhaps even more than the act in itself, the mode and the circumstances have caused indignation and offence. It is one of the rare occasions in all history where a great act of State has been carried out with personal fury and outrage. And it is hard to imagine the end which personal fury and outrage can serve. There was no other public occasion on which Cromwell displayed ungovernable passion. But he was a man of volcanic temper, at all times liable to outbursts of coarseness. From his youth he was given to moody frenzies and ecstatic outpourings of the inmost soul.

The practice of Bible expounding in the camp had developed in him an unctuous and heated mannerism. At times in battle, we have seen, he seemed deliberately to fling off all control, as when at Drogheda and at Worcester he dashed into the fray with a fury which can hardly be forgiven in a supreme commander. The story reads to us as if Cromwell, resolved not to be checkmated by the Bill, had not quite decided how in detail he would act. Then committing himself to an unbridled rage, in the consciousness of overpowering force and a direct mission from God, he let the whole torrent of his will and of his scorn boil over in the sight of all men.

In strict constitutional right the House was no more the Parliament than Cromwell was the king. A House of Commons, which had executed the king, abolished the Lords, approved the *coup d'état* of Pride, and by successive proscriptions had reduced itself to a few score of extreme partisans, had no legal title to the name of Parliament. The junto which held to Vane was not more numerous than the junto which held to Cromwell; they had far less public support; nor had their services to the Cause been so great. In closing the House, the Lord-General had used his office of Commander-in-Chief to anticipate one *coup d'état* by another. Had he been ten minutes late, Vane would himself have dissolved the House; snapping a vote which would give his faction a legal ascendancy. Yet, after all, the fact remains that Vane and the remnant of the famous Long Parliament had that *scintilla juris*, as lawyers call it, that semblance of legal right which counts for so much in things political. Civil society is held together by conventional respect for legalised authority. And in the shipwreck

of the Constitution some *tabula in naufragio*, to use a legal metaphor, still rested in the hands of the few score members who remained. History and Englishmen have not yet forgiven the great soldier who broke through this ancient conventional respect, tearing down a legal *simulacrum*, useless and obstructive as it long had been. In the mind of Cromwell, always impatient of legal conventions, the urgent call of public duty and the manifest favour of Heaven outweighed all the evils which must have been suggested to him by his prudence, his sagacity, and his wonderful knowledge of men.

His deed must be judged by its results and its essence. Was it good, was it necessary, for Cromwell to anticipate Vane? Were the moral forces with Vane or with Cromwell? The technical rights of either were shadowy enough; the act took place in mid-revolution and utter chaos; public confidence was in no way shaken. So stated, it is plain that it was Cromwell, and not Vane, who could give the nation peace, good government, legal, social, and religious reform. It was Cromwell, and not Vane, who had behind him the effective weight of the nation. If Cromwell had in numbers less than a majority of the people, Vane had behind him nothing but an unpopular and divided faction. Coarse and violent as was Cromwell's conduct, high-minded and patriotic as was Vane's nature, Cromwell was a mighty statesman, and Vane was only a noble character. The final judgment of history must come back to the prevalent opinion of the time: that, outside a small group of partisans and doctrinaire republicans, no man regretted Cromwell's act. A year and a half later he said in Parliament:—

"I told them,—for I knew it better than any one man in the Parliament could know it ; because of my manner of life which was to run up and down the nation, thereby giving me to see and know the temper and spirits of all men, and of the best of men,—that the Nation loathed their sitting, I knew it. And, so far as I could discern, when they were dissolved, there was not so much as the barking of a dog, or any general or visible repining at it ! You are not a few here present who can assert this as well as myself."

Returning to Whitehall, Cromwell found the officers still in council, and after some expressions of dissent, he satisfied them of the justice of his act. In the afternoon, attended by Lambert and Harrison, he went down to the Council of State. He told them that there was no place for them there, as the Parliament was dissolved. Bradshaw, Scott, Haslerig, and others protested, and then, without more words, withdrew. Three days later a long, elaborate, and Biblical document appeared, as the "Declaration of the Lord-General and his Council of Officers." It evidently embodies Cromwell's own mind, if it were not written by his hand, and entirely agrees with the account given in his speeches. It asserted that the honest people of the nation and the army, having sought the Lord, felt it to be a duty to secure the cause and to establish righteousness and peace in these nations ; as the late Parliament were seeking to perpetuate themselves, they had been necessitated to put an end to it. It concluded with a long sermon on the duty of godly men ; and order was given that all judges, sheriffs, mayors, and other civil officers should proceed in the execution of their respective offices. Within a few days came in declarations of adhesion from the navy, the armies in Scotland and in Ireland, and addresses from

municipal and civic bodies. There were no resignations, no arrests, no further force. The fighting men approved, the officials obeyed, the nation acquiesced. And without a show of opposition, the whole machinery of the State passed quietly into the strong hand of Cromwell.

He was determined that it should be no military despotism. Resolute as he was that there should be a person as head of the State, he was equally resolute that the government should be a civil government, with an elected legislature, a Parliament to vote taxes and make laws, and an executive bound in legal limits. What he did, he told the Little Parliament, was not to grasp at the power himself, or to keep it in military hands, no, not for a day; but to put it into the hands of proper persons that might be called from the several parts of the nation. Ten days after the close of the Long Parliament Cromwell issued a further declaration in his own name, that Parliament being dissolved, persons of approved fidelity and honesty were to be called from the several parts of this Commonwealth to the supreme authority, and in the meantime a Council of State should be constituted. An interim Council of thirteen, four of them civilians, was appointed; and summonses were issued to divers persons to undertake the "Trust" of the government of the Commonwealth. In the meantime for nine weeks Oliver continued to govern, by the advice of the Council and his officers.

Some hundred and forty summonses were issued by Cromwell to "persons fearing God, and of approved fidelity and honesty"—names mainly suggested, it seems, by the "godly clergy." Some were men of rank and fortune; eighteen had sat in the Long Parliament;

Monk and Blake and some soldiers were members, and some were extreme types of the Puritan sects. Only two did not attend. They met on the 4th of July 1653; they sat five months; passed some useful measures, raised many burning questions, were named the Little Parliament. Cromwell opened the sitting with a long and powerful speech. He began by the story of the civil wars; how God had raised up a poor and contemptible company of men and given them success, simply by their owning a principle of godliness and religion. How the Long Parliament had become impracticable; how in many months together they had failed to settle one word, "incumbrances"; how, as they had neglected all their duties, they had been dissolved. How the general, anxious "to divest the sword of all power in the civil administration, had summoned them that he might devolve the burden on their shoulders." In thus calling them to the exercises of the supreme authority, he that means to be their servant takes occasion to offer them some charge. Then he bursts into an impassioned sermon, taking texts from the prophets, the psalms, the epistles—a sermon rich with grand passages, with quaint, homely, vivid phrases, such as Bunyan might have uttered, fatherly exhortations to righteousness and trust in God. Finally he turns again to his favourite psalm, the 68th, the psalm he sang on the field of Dunbar: "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him flee before him. . . . The earth shook, the heavens also dropped in the presence of God. . . . The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." "And indeed," cries out the Puritan

soldier, "the triumph of that psalm is exceeding high and great; and God is accomplishing it." Never before in the history of England was Parliament opened by speech like that.

This is the first of those speeches of Cromwell to his Parliament, some nineteen in all, which are amongst the most precious records of history. Now that laborious love has unveiled them to us, we can look down through them into the inmost spirit of the man. Uncouth, tangled, and periphrastic as much in them seems to us, wrapped up in a Biblical verbiage which has long been confined to the pulpit, ill-reported, full of broken sentences and confused periods, there is yet in them an innate majesty and truthfulness; nay, eloquence; even poetry and pathos. We hear the very beat of a great, generous heart; we see the flash of an heroic temper, full of trust, of sublime desires, of unshaken courage. The religious hopes are not ours; the cast of mind is one which only by an effort can we picture to ourselves; the mixture of practical business with the promises and manifestations of God to the saints is to us so strange as to sound hardly sane. Yet such is the greatest attempt ever made in history to found a civil society on the literal words of Scripture. So deep is the gulf which, in things spiritual, two centuries and a half have set between them and us.

The doings of this assembly of Puritan notables need not detain us. Cromwell plainly designed them to be a constituent, not a permanent body; to call a regular Parliament; and to exercise provisional authority. There never was before, he said, a supreme authority so called, 140 persons not one but had in him faith

in Jesus Christ. He plainly told them that they had the affairs of the nation committed to them; that the existing Council of State held power only in the interim; that it rested with them to continue this Council or appoint another. In his third speech (12th September 1654) he called God to witness that his chief end in summoning them was to divest himself of the absolute power in his hands, as he desired not to live for a day in the unlimited condition of boundless authority. But as he afterwards amply confessed, this assembly of godly persons was an utter failure. They did good and vigorous work. They sought to abolish the Court of Chancery; they undertook to frame a code of law; they proceeded to reform the Church, to abolish tithes, Church patronage, and to establish civil marriage. All this done in the trenchant spirit of religious fervour, which alarmed all interests, and aroused every class. The Church, property, law, society seemed threatened by reformers who were prepared, Bible in hand, to dispose at once of every question of the day. Cromwell, intensely conservative by habit, and a keen observer of public opinion, grew uneasy when he saw the reign of the saints beginning in earnest. Four years later he publicly confessed his own folly and weakness, admitting that these godly men were going straight to "confusion of all things": would have "swallowed up all civil and religious interest, and brought us under the horriddest arbitrariness that ever was exercised in the world." In him godliness never for a moment overpowered his instinct for the practical and the politic. In them godliness was enough, and all things and all men were unworthy to be set in the scale. The indignation without rose to fury. Such

root-and-branch reformation of all institutions on a pure Biblical basis was being attempted by men who had no constituents, no real power, who were mostly unknown nominees of a religious party. By a politic *coup-de-main*, the majority, perceiving the situation, suddenly resigned their powers to the general who had given them.

Parliament and Council of State departed, Cromwell was left as the sole legalised authority in the nation. But he had no intention of holding authority alone. He summoned his Council of officers and other persons of interest. Within a few days it was announced that the Council had offered, and he had accepted the style of Lord Protector of the Commonwealth, to carry on the government by the advice of a Council and with an Instrument of Government, or written Constitution. By this charter the government was vested in a Protector, a Council of thirteen at least and twenty-one at most, and the Commons of England, Scotland, and Ireland, meeting in triennial Parliament, the first to begin on 3d September 1654. All Bills that they passed were to become law, even without the Protector's assent, after twenty days. Until the sitting of Parliament, the Protector and his Council had power to make Ordinances, having the force of law. The office of Protector was to be elective, to be chosen by the Council.

On 16th of December 1653 Oliver was formally installed with some simple state. He became a constitutional and strictly limited sovereign for life.

CHAPTER XI

THE PROTECTORATE

A.D. 1653-1658. *ÆTAT.* 54-59

FROM his installation, on 16th December 1653, until his death, 3d September 1658, a period of nearly five years, Oliver held supreme power as Protector of the Commonwealth. His task now was to control the Revolution which he had led to victory; and his career enters on a new and yet greater phase. He stands out amongst the very few men in all history who, having overthrown an ancient system of government, have proved themselves with even greater success to be constructive and conservative statesmen. In this giant's task Oliver had the sympathy and devotion of many of the truest lovers of liberty, justice, and religion. But he had against him Vane, Hutchinson, Ludlow, Bradshaw, Sidney, Haslerig, and many a noble friend of his manhood, to whom the Revolution meant republican equality even more than liberty, and legal right even more than order and prosperity. He had against him too another group of earnest Commonwealth men, to whom the struggle meant a religious and social revolution—men like the austere enthusiast Harrison, the frantic Sexby, and the zealot Overton, the friend of Milton. Of the

men who had made the Revolution, some were doctrinaire republicans, some were Bible fanatics, some were constitutional martinets, some were socialist dreamers. Oliver was no one of these ; and such men were all from the first his opponents. But he had with him the Puritan rank and file, the great majority of the superior officers, such clear and lofty spirits as those of Milton and Marvell, Blake and Lockhart, Lawrence and Lisle ; the men of business ; all moderate men of every party who desired peace, order, good government ; the great cities ; the army and the navy. With these, and his own commanding genius, he held his own triumphantly, slowly winning the confidence of the nation by virtue of unbroken success and (as it seemed) miraculous fortune. Thus he grew ever larger, until he lay in his last sleep murmuring, "My work is done:" in battle, a soldier who had never met with a reverse, so a statesman who in a supreme place had never met with a fall.

Cromwell was, and felt himself to be, a dictator called in by the winning cause in a revolution to restore confidence and secure peace. He was, as he said frequently, "the Constable set to keep order in the Parish." Nor was he in any sense a military despot. He was no professional soldier ; and he had no taste for arbitrary or martial rule. He was a citizen and a country gentleman, who at the age of forty-three first girt on his sword in earnest, and at the age of fifty-two had put it off. Though he distrusted and disliked a Parliamentary executive, he clung to a civil and legal executive. From first to last after the closing of the Long Parliament, he struggled for five years to realise his fixed idea of a dual government—neither a Dictator without a Parliament,

nor a Parliament without a Head of the Executive. With dogged iteration he repeats—the government shall rest with a Single Person and a Parliament, the Parliament making all laws and voting all supplies, co-ordinate with the authority of the Chief Person, and not meddling with the executive. This was his idea—an idea which the people of England have rejected, but which the people of America have adopted. More than a century later the founders of the United States revived and established Oliver's ideal, basing it upon popular election, a thing which, in 1654, was impossible in England.

Never did a ruler invested with absolute power and overwhelming military force more obstinately strive to surround his authority with legal limits and Parliamentary control. The possession of boundless power and arbitrary authority, even as a temporary expedient, seemed to have in it something which alarmed and shocked his nature. Absolute as he was after his triumphal return from Worcester, he deliberately sank his personality for nineteen months in the routine of his office, and laboured indirectly to get the work done by Parliament. Ten days after closing the Long Parliament he announced the summoning of a Convention Parliament. When that suddenly dissolved itself, within a few days he procured the Instrument of Government to be drawn, without which he refused the office of Protector. This Instrument involved the election of a new Parliament, on the footing of the admirable Reform Bill sketched out by Ireton and completed by Vane. By it the Protector was placed in the position of a strictly limited king, on the lines of the constitution, but with new Parliamentary prerogatives. Not only was the Protector

bound by Parliament, but he was bound by the Council, which was not removable by him. The Instrument of Government was a constitution of a strictly limited type. And it was the basis of Oliver's authority as Protector.

During the five years of his supreme power, from the end of the Long Parliament, Oliver summoned three Parliaments, and the longest period in which he ruled without one was a year and eight months. Parliaments he did not like; did not understand; and managed with indifferent skill. He preferred a council, or a committee, for business. But he never repudiated the principle that laws and taxes are the necessary function of Parliament alone. The free election of Parliament on a really democratic basis he saw was impossible, at the risk of ruining the cause and re-opening the Civil War. Therein he was plainly right; and as a matter of constitutional law, all that can be said is, that in mid-revolution normal institutions are not always workable. What he thought practicable and safe with the only materials at hand, that he patiently endeavoured to effect. Most certain it is that he was no Parliamentary leader, and never could become one. His genius and nature had none of the elements which go to the making of a born chief of a Parliament. His intolerance of conventions, his scorn of eloquent egoism, his abhorrence of obstruction, delay, and waste, his intense masterfulness and passion for action, made him unfit for Parliamentary work. Both morally and intellectually he was not made to play the part of a Walpole or a Pitt. From the first his Protectorate was hampered by the fact that, though he recognised a Parliament as indispensable, he was by

nature and training unendowed with Parliamentary tact. The forces of our race were against him. For the fortunes of England have for more than a century required Parliamentary skill as the secret of success in a statesman. And it has been our misfortune too seldom to recognise the genius of a ruler, where there is conspicuously absent the genius of the debater.

The question at issue was one of surpassing interest, which constitutional lawyers have never fully seized. As the English Commonwealth was the first example in modern Europe of a people sitting in judgment on their king and converting a kingdom into a republic, so the Instrument of Government was the first example of a long line of written constitutions. The fixed idea of Cromwell was the fixed idea of the founders of the United States of America, and of nearly every known continental system. There should be, he thought, a written Instrument; there should be an Executive Authority, not directly subordinate to Parliament; and there should be what Oliver called "fundamentals," or what we now call "constitutional guarantees"—fundamental bases not alterable like ordinary laws. England is the one country in the modern world where "fundamentals" or "constitutional guarantees" are unknown. And on the opening of a new republican era in England Cromwell's position was exactly that of Washington, of Hamilton, Jay, and Madison. The fixed idea of Vane, Bradshaw, Haslerig, and all the greater Parliamentarians, was to establish the autocracy of an elected House, supreme over the Executive, and free from any constitutional limit, just as we see it to-day. It was a momentous issue, nobly represented on both sides. That

there was no Supreme Court, no constitutional arbiter, no appeal to the nation, was inevitable in the situation. The ideal of Vane and his friends was not established conclusively until the time of Pitt—130 years later, and the event proved how right Oliver was in insisting that in mid-revolution, with half the nation indifferent or hostile, it meant simple chaos.

From this point Oliver's life is the history of England, a history which could not be told in detail within the limits of this book. It will be best to concentrate his five years of power under three heads, which will form as many chapters; so as to devote the first to the general political position of the Protector, the second to his home administration, the last to his foreign policy. In his great task, Oliver had to aid him soldiers, seamen, diplomatists, and administrators, as able as any that ever served a king; but we miss nearly all the great names of the Civil Wars. The grand, pure figure of Ireton, the true founder of the Commonwealth, the one hero of the war who came nearest to Oliver, is gone. He died of fever in Ireland (November 1651). Ludlow, the contriver of Pride's Purge, the stalwart republican, honest heart and fine soldier, is soon to withdraw in disgust. Harrison, the noble fanatic, the right hand of Oliver when he closed the Long Parliament, the leader in the Parliament of Saints, was to pass much of the Protectorate in prison. As he said in his proud defiance to his judges, "When I found those that were as the apple of mine eye to turn aside, I did loathe them, and suffered imprisonment many years." Lambert, the second soldier of the Civil Wars, the real author of the Protectorate, was still loyal to Oliver. Blake, Monk,

Fleetwood, Lockhart, Broghill, Skippon, Wolseley, commanded his forces. In his Council and offices were some of the ablest men who have ever served this country. But the glory of his rule is John Milton. By a rare or unexampled fortune, the first political genius of his age was served by the greatest literary genius of his time. Cromwell and Milton stand forth as inseparable types : the Puritan statesman, the Puritan poet. Milton, who was appointed Foreign Secretary to the Council almost upon the establishment of the Commonwealth, served throughout the Protectorate of Oliver. It was during Oliver's struggle with the Long Parliament (1652) that he wrote his famous sonnet, "Cromwell, our chief of Men." It was upon the establishment of the Protectorate (May 1654) that he published the magnificent panegyric in the *Defensio Secunda*.—

"We are deserted, Cromwell; you alone remain; the sum-total of our affairs has come back to you, and hangs on you alone; we all yield to your insuperable worth. . . . In human society there is nothing more pleasing to God, more agreeable to reason, nothing fairer and more useful to the State, than that the worthiest should bear rule."

Never had ruler so mighty a poet in his service; never did poet share such labours of State under so great a chief.

Oliver had learned a severe lesson from the failure of the godly persons in the Little Parliament. Till then he had cherished the belief that, though Parliament had failed, though Presbyterians were tyrannical, lawyers self seeking, the rich profligate, and the mass of men worldly, yet the cause would triumph if the godly could be placed in absolute power for a time. He had placed

them in power; and he had seen the Commonwealth tending to "confusion in all things." From that hour Oliver recovered his common sense. He saw that even the godly were prone to tyranny, folly, and mischief; and he saw the still greater difficulty of ascertaining who the godly are. Here, as always, Oliver proved to be a thorough conservative. As he opposed all democratic ideas of unrestricted appeal to the suffrage; as he had crushed the Levellers when they assailed property; so he shrank from the social revolution dreamed of by the Bible saints. He told his first Parliament: "As to the authority in the Nation; to the Magistracy; to the Ranks and Orders of men—whereby England hath been known for hundreds of years—a nobleman, a gentleman, a yeoman; that is a good interest of the Nation and a great one!" Never again did he risk a real Reign of the Saints. He grew in his notions of statecraft ever wider, more practical, more tolerant. He relied more firmly on his carnal judgment; he came to see the strong sides of many persuasions. Like all great men, by the exercise of responsible power, Oliver grew and broadened continually.

By the Instrument of Government Parliament was to meet on 3d of September; and in the nine months that intervened Oliver was to govern by means of Ordinances. He issued in that period some eighty-two, of various purport and of great importance. The Church, the Preachers, Chancery, the Treasury, Ireland, Scotland, Police, Public Order, Education, Taxation, are all dealt with in the form of Acts of Parliament. A most advantageous peace was made with the Dutch. And treaties of alliance or commerce were concluded with

Sweden, with Denmark, and with Portugal. France and Spain were bidding against each other for the alliance of England. On the very day when Count Sa, the Portuguese minister, signed the treaty, Cromwell beheaded Don Pantaleon Sa, his brother, who had been dragged from the embassy, tried and convicted of murder. The Protector's government was at once seen to be the most powerful in Europe. He now removed to Whitehall, assumed the State of a supreme ruler, signed *Oliver P.*, and was king in all but name.

Oliver addressed his first Protectorate Parliament on Sunday, the 3d of September:—

"Gentlemen," he said, "you are met here on the greatest occasion that, I believe, England ever saw; having upon your shoulders the Interests of three great Nations with the territories belonging to them; and truly, I believe I may say it without any hyperbole, you have upon your shoulders the interest of all the Christian people in the world." He expatiated on the confusion in the State, and told them the great end before them was Healing and Settling. The ten years' civil war had led the country to the brink of social dissolution, and to spiritual chaos. Liberty of conscience and liberty of the subject were being abused for the patronising of villanies. The Fifth Monarchy men would impose again the Judaical Law. Nothing was in the hearts and minds of men but "Overturn, overturn, overturn!" whilst the common Enemy sleeps not. Abroad the dangers were abating, but were still great. There was Scotland; there was Ireland to settle:—great tasks on all sides. And the Protector implored them, "not as one having dominion over them, but as their fellow-servant," to apply themselves to the great works upon their hands.

It was not to be. Immediately, under the leadership of old Parliamentarians, Haslerig, Scott, Bradshaw, and many other republicans, the House proceeded to debate

the Instrument of Government, the constitutional basis of the existing system. By five votes, it decided to discuss "whether the House should approve of government by a Single Person and a Parliament." This was of course to set up the principle of making the Executive dependent on the House; a principle, in Oliver's mind, fatal to settlement and order. He acted at once. Calling on the Lord Mayor to secure the city, and disposing his own guard round Westminster Hall, he summoned the House again on the ninth day, and again addressed to them an earnest and powerful appeal.

They were, he said, a free Parliament, provided they recognised the authority which had called them together. "I called not myself to this place! God and the People of these nations have borne testimony to it. God and the People shall take it from me, else I will not part with it. I should be false to the trust that God hath placed in me, and to the interest of the People of these nations, if I did." Then he tells the story of his own calling; that he hoped to have leave to retire into private life; that the Long Parliament was becoming an intolerable tyranny when he closed it; that the Little Parliament of Saints was a failure; that on their resignation, he was left the only authority, a person having power over three Nations, without bound or limit set:—not very ill beloved by the Armies nor by the People. The Nation was in such a state that all Government was dissolved, and nothing left to keep things in order but the Sword. They who held the Sword had called him to be Protector. His nomination had been accepted by the City of London, many cities, boroughs, and counties; the judges, justices, sheriffs, and other officials had acted under his authority. Lastly, the Parliament itself met there under his writs. You cannot, he says, disown the authority by which alone you sit. There are some things which are *Fundamental*—guaranteed by the constitution and not to be altered by a vote of the House. These are: first, government by a Single

Person and a Parliament, not by a particular person, but by a Single Person. "*In every Government there must be somewhat Fundamental, somewhat like a Magna Charta, which should be standing, be unalterable.*" Secondly, it is a Fundamental that Parliament should not make themselves perpetual. Thirdly, liberty of conscience in religion is a Fundamental. Fourthly, it is Fundamental that the military forces shall not be at the sole disposal either of Parliament or Executive, but held conjointly between them: not a man being raised, nor a penny charged on the People, nothing can be done without consent of Parliament; and in the intervals of Parliament, without consent of the Council. The Supreme Officer has thus a power co-ordinate with, and not dependent on, the Parliament. All other things, he says, are "*Circumstantials*"—to be regulated by Parliament—civil expenses, and ordinary legislation. On these things, cries the Protector, I am forced to insist. "Necessity hath no law." True, some men pretend necessities; but it would be mere pedantry, mere stupidity, to assert that there are no real necessities. "I have to say: the wilful throwing away of this Government, such as it is, so owned of God, so approved by men, so witnessed to—— I can sooner be willing to be rolled into my grave and buried with infamy, than I can give my consent unto!"

Oliver's position was this. After twelve years of war and strife, the three nations were in a state of political, social, and religious chaos. The one power which maintained order was the regimented party, called the army. The army had formally called on its commander-in-chief to assume responsible government under a written constitution. He had done so: the whole magistracy and civil administration had accepted him; for many months had worked heartily in his service; the nation had ratified their choice. A House of Parliament had been summoned by his writs, on the authority of the new constitution. It was not for them

to dispute or upset it. His own authority was prior, more truly national, and more really representative.

Members were called on to sign a declaration, "not to alter the government as settled in a Single Person and a Parliament." Some three hundred signed; the minority—about a fourth—refused and retired. Vane, Ludlow, Sidney, Marten, as consistent republicans, had even refused to be candidates. But neither Vane, Ludlow, nor Sidney were possible protectors of the Republic: and a Republic without a Head was an idle dream.

The Parliament, in spite of the declaration, set itself from the first to discuss the constitution, to punish heretics, suppress blasphemy, revise the Ordinances of the Council; and they deliberately withheld all supplies for the services and the government. At last they passed an Act for revising the constitution *de novo*. Not a single Bill had been sent up to the Protector for his assent. Oliver, as usual, acted at once. On the expiration of their five lunar months, 22d January 1655, he summoned the House and dissolved it, with a speech full of reproaches. He said: "Dissettlement and division, discontent and dissatisfaction; together with real dangers to the whole,—have been more multiplied within these five months of your sitting than in some years before!" Then he enlarges on the dangers and confusions. A government, limited in a Single Person and a Parliament, had called them there as most agreeable to the general sense of the Nation, as most likely to avoid the extremes of Monarchy on the one hand, and of Democracy on the other;—and yet not to found *Dominium in gratiâ*."

No Parliament was called for a year and eight months; the revival of insurrection drove Cromwell to attempt to govern by a system of provincial prefects, known as that of the major-generals; and the need of money forced him to a series of arbitrary methods for obtaining supplies. Both of these will be considered in the next chapter. It had been no part of Cromwell's scheme to suppress Parliaments. And he summoned another on 17th of September 1656. Immense efforts were made by the major-generals to exclude hostile candidates; and even after this, one hundred elected members were declared by the Council disqualified, and forcibly excluded from the House. Oliver addressed them in a long and memorable speech—partly a reasoned justification of his government; partly a magnificent Puritan sermon.

This Parliament was mainly occupied with a scheme for vesting the Crown in Oliver. The question of Cromwell assuming the monarchy, though intrinsically difficult to decide, is perfectly simple to follow. The majority in Parliament, the lawyers, the men of business, the more conservative of the Puritans, honestly desired it, as the only chance of an effective settlement. The nation was not actively averse. But the bulk of the army disliked it: most of the officers protested; the republicans, the Fifth Monarchy fanatics, the Bible zealots, were rabidly indignant. Cromwell himself was ready to take the title, if he could see "a clear call" to it. Now a "clear call" in his eyes was the preponderating voice of the religious, earnest, and thoughtful men of the party. That "call" he could not satisfy himself that he had received. And, deeply as his

judgment assented to the reasons in its favour, he could not assume such an office, whilst it still was so wanting in the witnessing of conscience and of God.

The arguments that made for kingship were very real and very weighty. The office of King was known to the law, to the constitution, to the people. The prerogatives, rights, limits, and functions of the king were solidly settled by custom; bounded, said the lawyers, as well as any acre of land. Neither in law nor in public opinion was the throne destroyed when the king was dethroned. There stood the vacant place; which, in the minds of so many, Charles Stuart might any day return to fill. The institution itself was intact; and round it centred the law, the life of the body politic, the entire mechanism of administration. A "King" was a legal, constitutional, traditional, familiar functionary. A "Protector" was a provisional *locum tenens*, with no known prerogatives, no known limits, an indefinite and unfamiliar makeshift. The full force of this reasoning sank into Cromwell's brain. His sympathy with order, with established institutions, his yearning for a "settlement," his personal desire to legalise his own authority in the eyes of the entire nation—all pressed upon his judgment. Long he pondered, waited, compromised, sought for a witnessing from the Powers of Light and Truth. They still stood averse. He was now materially strong enough to have mastered opposition in the army. But morally, he could not so break with his own past, with his own spiritual life, with the godly men whom he had so long led, as to step into the seat of the king they had beheaded. Here, and for the last time, the army appears

as the conscience of the nation. Steadily and with dignity he put the Crown aside. He valued the title, he said, but "as a feather in his hat." If his judgment erred, his higher instinct was true. He never was greater than in refusing a dignity which would have taken all meaning out of the Puritan Revolution—even though his refusal was certain to doom the Puritan Revolution itself as a premature and short-lived effort.

Though he refused the title of king, he accepted the new Protectorate on a revised basis, and was installed with the ceremonial of a coronation in Westminster Hall, 26th June 1657. Oliver had now the right of appointing his successor, and of creating a House of Lords. He was thus Sovereign in all but name: with something that could be called a national constitution and a Parliamentary title. The second protectorate Parliament on the Installation prorogued itself until January 1658. When it met on the second session, it was in a different temper. The excluded members were readmitted: Haslerig, Scott, and the other malcontents were again the leaders of the House; and they at once began a deliberate campaign to destroy the constitution under which they met. Twice within five days the Protector poured out on them an impassioned discourse to consider the national perils, and to legislate instead of upsetting the established Government. He had taken his oath, he said, to govern according to the laws that were then made. "I sought not this place. I speak it before God, Angels, and Men: I did not. You sought me for it, you brought me to it; and I took my oath to be faithful to the interest of these nations, to be faithful to the Govern-

ment." Parliament continued to assail the constitution. Ten days later the Protector suddenly dissolved them in a speech of burning indignation and proud defiance (4th February 1658).

"There is not a man living can say I sought it (the place of Protector); no, not a man nor woman treading upon English ground. But contemplating the sad condition of these Nations, relieved from an intestine war into a six or seven years' Peace, I did think the Nation happy therein; I can say in the presence of God, in comparison with whom we are but like poor creeping ants upon the earth,—I would have been glad to have lived under my woodside, to have kept a flock of sheep—rather than undertake such a government as this. But undertaking it by the Advice and Petition of you, I did look that you who had offered it unto me should make it good." Then he dilates on the manifold perils to the State, within and without. "What is like to come upon this, the Enemy being ready to invade us, but even present blood and confusion? And if this be so, I do assign it to this cause: your not assenting to what you did invite me to by your Petition and Advice, as that which might prove the Settlement of the Nation. And if this be the end of your sitting, and this be your carriage—I think it high time that an end be put to your sitting. And I do dissolve this Parliament. And let God be judge between you and me."

Such was Oliver's last Parliament. His position now was the same as it was four years ago; the business of Parliament in the midst of a revolutionary crisis, at the close of a long civil war, was to pass laws and vote supplies, and not to reopen constitutional struggles. He never held another Parliament. His "Upper House," or "House of Lords," was an utter failure. He was planning the election of a third Parliament when his own end came.

Apart from opposition from his Parliaments, the Protectorate was one unbroken success. Order, trade, commerce, justice, learning, culture, rest, and public confidence, returned and grew ever stronger. Prosperity, wealth, harmony, were restored to the nation; and with these a self-respect, a spirit of hope and expansion such as it had not felt since the defeat of the Armada. Never in the history of England has a reorganisation of its administrative machinery been known at once so thorough and so sound. No royal government had ever annihilated insurrection and cabal with such uniform success, and with moderation so great. No government, not even that of Henry VII. or of Elizabeth, had ever been more frugal; though none with its resources had effected so much. No government had ever been so tolerant in things of the mind; none so just in its dealings with classes and interests; none so eager to suppress abuses, official tyranny, waste and speculation. No government had been so distinctly modern in its spirit; so penetrated with desire for reform, honesty, capacity. For the first time in England the republican sense of social duty to the State began to replace the old spirit of personal loyalty to a Sovereign. For the first and only time in modern Europe morality and religion became the sole qualifications insisted on by a Court. In the whole modern history of Europe, Oliver is the one ruler into whose presence no vicious man could ever come; whose service no vicious man might enter.

But it was in foreign policy that the immediate splendour of Oliver's rule dazzled his contemporaries. "His greatness at home," wrote Clarendon, "was but a

shadow of the glory he had abroad." Englishmen and English historians have hardly even yet taken the full measure of the stunning impression produced on Europe by the power of the Protector. It was the epoch when supremacy at sea finally passed from the Dutch to the English. It was the beginning of the maritime Empire of England. And it was the first vision of a new force which was destined to exercise so great an influence, the increased power of fleets and marine artillery to destroy seaports and dominate a seaboard. Hitherto fleets had fought with fleets. But Blake taught modern Europe that henceforward fleets can control kingdoms. It was the sense of this new power, so rapid, so mobile, with so long an arm and practically ubiquitous, that caused Mazarin and Louis, Spain and Portugal, Pope and Princes of Italy, to bow to the summons of Oliver. England became a European Power of the first rank, as she never had been since the Plantagenets, not even in the proudest hours of Wolsey or Elizabeth. From the Baltic to the Mediterranean, from Algiers to Teneriffe, from Newfoundland to Jamaica, were heard the English cannon. And the sense of this new factor in the politics of the world produced on the minds of the age such an impression as the rise of the German Empire with the consolidation of the German military system has produced upon our own. All through his rule Oliver had laboured to found a vast Protestant League, a new Balance of Power. Had he ruled for another generation the history of Europe might have had some different cast.

It was not to be. The Protectorate fell in the zenith of its power; and there was silence on the earth for a

space. For nearly two years more the Commonwealth held together: wholly without a Head, almost without a Government. Could it have been prolonged? Yes. Could it have been permanent? No. The Commonwealth and its government might well have lasted for the whole life of Oliver. But none, save he, could maintain it. And even he could not have made it lasting. The movement was essentially premature; not adequately prepared; from first to last the work of a minority, though a minority stronger, nobler, wiser than all the rest of the nation. Its dominant spirit, Puritanism, was fatally impracticable for constructive work as a political and social scheme. This the sublime common sense of Oliver forced upon him, step by step overpowering the intense devoutness of his faith. And ever larger as grew the statesman, less and less was Oliver the rigid Puritan, the literal Bible zealot.

Was then the work of his life a failure? Not so: for, in some sense, most of the great movements in history are for a time premature, and the labours of most great statesmen result in consequences that they little intend or conceive. How utterly does the history of England since 1640 differ from the history of England before that date!

Could Cromwell have maintained his system, had he lived? There is no reason to doubt it. No ruler in ancient or in modern times has ever surpassed him in the qualities of vigilance, caution, and foresight. As a statesman he happily rose superior to the chivalrous disregard of personal safety which had been fatal to Caesar, William the Silent, Henry IV., and Buckingham. His almost miraculous insight into his enemies' plots

and his sleepless watchfulness of public opinion give every ground for thinking that he would have been as successful in the future as he had been in the past. He may be said to be almost the one politician of the first rank continuously attended by uniform success: who had never been surprised by an enemy, and on whom no opponent had ever inflicted a disaster. The one condition of the maintenance of his rule was the duration of his life. Had his life been prolonged to the age of seventy-five—now almost the normal limit for modern statesmen—the Protectorate might have lasted for twenty years instead of five. It is perhaps not an idle dream that, in some way, it might have handed on a peaceful and reformed State to a constitutional Monarchy, without the debasing interlude of the Restoration. In 1674 William of Orange was twenty-four years of age, already a great captain and an experienced statesman, the hope of the Protestant cause and the bulwark in Europe against tyranny. Is it utterly impossible that the great Stadtholder might have peacefully succeeded the great Protector, under some national alliance, or even by the marriage of William with one of the family of Cromwell? England might have been spared the ignominy and the bloodshed of the restored Stuarts; the long English Revolution might have been a gradual and peaceful evolution from a feudal to an industrial, from a mediæval to a modern polity; and the great Chief of the Commonwealth might have peacefully handed over a new and grander England to the great Founder of our Constitutional Monarchy.

CHAPTER XII

HOME POLICY OF THE PROTECTORATE

THE internal policy of the Protector can only be understood if we regard him as a temporary Dictator set up to close an epoch of revolution and war. His rule was avowedly provisional and summary; based on expediency, necessity, and public peace. Constitutional right it could have none: it rested on the sword, as in times of revolution and civil war all government must rest. Cromwell's nature and genius were those of the practical man, dealing with the exigencies of the hour. He made no attempt to recast the political organism, or to found a bran-new set of institutions. As he said in Parliament, Healing and Settling were the crying needs of the time. He was the typical opportunist, doing what seemed best for the hour with the actual materials at hand. He did things quite as arbitrary as any Tudor or any Stuart. He did violent things—even odious things. He governed at times by sheer military force. But the true tests by which he must be judged are these. Was not his task essentially different from that of any Tudor, Stuart, or legitimate king? Was not his task an indispensable duty? Did he erect military government into a system, or carry arbitrary action beyond the immediate necessity? Was his government as a whole, given its revolutionary

origin and its military basis, that of the self-seeking military tyrant? These questions each of us must answer according to his general view of this momentous epoch.

The first duty of the Protector was to keep order. He was the constable set to keep the peace in the parish. In a country torn by rebellion and war for fourteen years and on the verge of social dissolution, external order was the first pressing need. No English government had ever kept it better—not even that of Henry VIII. or Elizabeth at their best. Neither Wolsey, nor Thomas Cromwell, nor Burleigh, nor Walsingham, nor Salisbury, were more vigilant, better served with information, or more skilful in using it, than were Oliver and Thurloe. During the Commonwealth there was, we may say, one continuous plot to assassinate the Protector and to restore the Stuarts, starting with the infamous proclamation of Charles to reward Oliver's assassin. In these attempts Anabaptists, Fifth-Monarchy men, Republicans, Catholics, and Royalists were constantly conspiring. Each and all were easily and quietly crushed. Nor were they crushed with wholesale bloodshed. Some eight or ten distinct conspiracies are recorded, the authors of which were arrested upon clear evidence of designs to kill the Protector or to destroy his government. Many scores of conspirators were arrested. Four only were executed: Gerard, Vowel, Sir H. Slingsby, and Dr. Hewit. One plot only broke into an insurrection. In that, Penruddock and Grove, taken in arms, were beheaded; several other actual insurgents were hanged; many more transported to Barbadoes.

Penruddock's insurrection led to the very severe policy against the Royalists, by which they were amerced in the tenth of their fortunes. It was a crushing measure, but it can hardly be called vindictive or wanton. The system of Major-Generals by which it was carried out was an anticipation of the modern method of government by Prefects and Military Governors of provinces. Oliver called it his "little poor invention," and it was undoubtedly an engine of terrible power. It was in the highest degree arbitrary and without a shadow of legal right. It was, in fact, the military occupation of a country after insurrection, declared, as we now say, to be in a state of siege—a condition with which in modern Europe we are but too familiar, and one which no government can absolutely renounce. It was a war measure, to be justified only, if at all, by the exigencies of war. It lasted in vigour somewhat more than a year, and was a terror to the Royalists, but not to the public. Having served its turn, it was dropped, partly in consequence of the odium it caused, partly because it served as an expedient to undermine the Protector's authority.

Most of the eighty-two Ordinances passed by the Protector and his Council were subsequently confirmed by Parliament. They consisted of measures to continue Taxes and Excise, for reorganising the Church, reforming the law, for union of Scotland with England, for consolidating the Treasury, for the reform of colleges, schools, and charitable foundations, and for the suppression of cock fighting, duelling, etc. etc. On the whole, this body of dictatorial legislation, abnormal in form as it is, in substance was a real, wise, and moderate set of reforms.

Taxation was throughout the great difficulty of the Protectorate, owing entirely to this: that Parliament so long occupied itself with checkmating or upsetting the Protectorate itself. This drove Oliver to measures which in point of constitutional law are quite as illegal as any device of James or Charles. And when he proceeded to procure the conviction of Cony, and actually sent to the Tower three eminent lawyers who claimed in his defence the ancient law of the land, it is open to any one to argue that this was as arbitrary as anything in the case of ship-money or the Impositions. The question for us is this: Was his arbitrary government in spirit and effect the same as that of Charles or James? As a matter of constitutional law the Protectorate as a whole is out of court altogether. Its sole plea is necessity. And though necessity is for the most part, as we know, the tyrant's plea, it is also at times the plea of the wise and just man in a great crisis.

If this arbitrary government had settled into a system, if it did not prepare for a return to a legal government by consent, Oliver stands condemned as a tyrant and not a Protector. It is possible that the situation was itself inherently impracticable, and the difficulties it presented may have been insuperable. But such as they were, each year of Oliver's short rule showed them as diminishing, and his power to control them as growing. The ancient organisation of England, political, judicial, administrative, ecclesiastical, and social—law, police, taxation, education, and government—had rested since the Conquest upon a king, a territorial Church, and a privileged territorial aristocracy. First the Church, and then the aristocracy, had broken away

from the revolutionary movement and rallied round the king. Oliver found both fanatically hostile to Commonwealth and to himself. And he had to found order—parliamentary, judicial, administrative, and ecclesiastical—in a society where the old ministers of such order were bent on producing disorder. A permanent settlement was beyond the reach of human genius. Such temporary settlement as was possible Oliver made.

Apart from its dictatorial character, the Protector's government was efficient, just, moderate, and wise. Opposed as he was by lawyers, he made some of the best judges England ever had. Justice and law opened a new era. The services were raised to their highest efficiency. Trade and commerce revived under his fostering care. Education was reorganised; the Universities reformed; Durham founded. It is an opponent who says: "All England over, these were Halcyon days." Men of learning of all opinions were encouraged and befriended. "If there was a man in England," says Neal, "who excelled in any faculty or science, the Protector would find him out, and reward him according to his merit." It was the Protector's brother-in-law, Warden of Wadham College, who there gathered together the group which ultimately founded the Royal Society.

Noble were the efforts of the Protector to impress his own spirit of toleration on the intolerance of his age; and stoutly he contended with Parliaments and Council for Quakers, Jews, Anabaptists, Socinians, and even crazy blasphemers. He effectively protected the Quakers; he admitted the Jews after an expulsion of three centuries; and he satisfied Mazarin that he had given to Catholics all the protection that he dared. In

his bearing towards his personal opponents, he was a model of magnanimity and self-control. Inexorable where public duty required punishment, neither desertion, treachery, obloquy, nor ingratitude ever could stir him to vindictive measures.

It is the high distinction of Oliver's Court that for once it exacted morality and purity from men as much as from women. He long refused his daughter's hand to the heir of the Earl of Warwick, because he was told the young man was given to play and other vices. The state kept by the Protector, though modest and serious, was neither gloomy nor uncouth. Oliver loved music, encouraged musicians, and held weekly concerts. He loved society; and was frank, humorous, and genial with his intimates; affable with dependants and strangers; stately and impressive on occasions of state. It is remembered to his honour that he preserved to our country the cartoons of Raffaele, and the "Triumph" of Mantegna, together with some royal palaces and parks; that he collected a fine library; that he sought out and gathered round him many men of genius and learning. He was generous of his personal fortune, and made no use of power to extend it. He showed no disposition to nepotism; was exceedingly slow to advance his own sons; did nothing to promote the private interest of his own family. About his whole career there was no stain of personal interest. He made no serious attempt to found a dynasty. He made no definite nomination even of a successor. After his death, he knew too well, nothing which he could do would save the Cause. He accepted the inevitable—and he did nothing.

CHAPTER XIII

FOREIGN POLICY OF THE PROTECTORATE

CROMWELL'S foreign policy had one consistent aim : to form a great Protestant Alliance, and to place England at its head. It was a policy not of War, but of Defence ; though peace was to be secured by the assertion of armed might on land and on sea. As a means to this end, it involved the destruction of the mercantile monopoly, first of the Dutch in Europe, and then of Spain in the west. In result, it placed England by one bound at the head of the powers of Europe ; it laid the foundations of the naval supremacy of England, and also of her transmarine Empire ; could it have been maintained unbroken down to the age of William III., it would have changed the whole history of Europe, and the latter half of the reign of Louis XIV. would have told a very different tale. Coming after the wars of religion, and before the dynastic wars and the commercial wars of the next hundred years, Cromwell's foreign policy was founded in part on religion, in part on trade. It was in no sense a policy of dynasty or of conquest. Had it been continued, it might have done much to prevent wars of dynasty and conquest. When the Commonwealth opened on the death of Charles I., England had sunk, both in credit and in power, to one

of the lowest points known to her history. At the death of the Protector, she held a rank in the eyes of Europe such as she had never reached since the days of the Plantagenets, such as she has never reached since, but in the time of Marlborough, Nelson, and Wellington.

The war which finally wrenched from the Dutch the supremacy at sea was the work of the Commonwealth. In this Cromwell shared, but his part was not so great as that of Vane or Blake. But it was his privilege to tell his first Parliament, as Protector, that he had already made four honourable treaties of Peace. Within four months he made peace with Holland, with Sweden, with Denmark, with Portugal; and was negotiating peace with France. "Peace is desirable with all men," he said, "so far as it may be had with conscience and honour!" "There is not a nation in Europe but is very willing to ask a good understanding with you." It was a proud saying,—and it was true.

Though he long made some politic hesitations, it is plain that, from the first, he honestly designed an alliance with France and not with Spain. And in this he was right, not only from the point of view of his time, but on a just estimate of the state of Europe. The safety of the Protestant cause was by no means yet secured; Spain, and not France, was then the head of the Catholic and retrograde forces; and the free commerce of the ocean was impossible whilst the exclusive pretensions of Spain existed. When Blake's guns destroyed fleet after fleet of Spain, when Penn and Venables conquered Jamaica, when Lockhart's red-coats swept away Don John's veterans, Cromwell was true to his idea of a great Protestant alliance, with England at its head.

All through his rule he laboured to unite the non-Catholic states—Sweden, Denmark, Holland, Brandenburg, and the other North German duchies, Switzerland, even Russia—"All the interests of the Protestants," he said, "are the same as yours"—regarding himself as the heir to the policy of Henry IV., of Elizabeth, of Gustavus Adolphus; preparing that of our own William of Orange. This policy reached its highest point in the magnificent burst of pity and indignation with which he championed the Vaudois against extermination: one of the noblest memories of England. It is seldom that in the history of a country national pride and moral elevation surround the same deed. It is seldom that the foremost statesman of an age joins to himself the foremost poet of his time in expressing in one voice the religion, the sympathy, the power, the generosity of a great nation. "Avenge, O Lord, Thy slaughtered Saints," wrote Oliver's secretary in verse. "*Pulcherrimi facti laus atque gloria illibata atque integra tua erit,*" he wrote in his Latin despatch from Oliver to Louis XIV. The sentence might serve for the Protector's epitaph.

The settlement of Scotland and its union with England was in every point of view one of the most complete of the Protector's works. Peace, order, justice, reform, prosperity, attended it in unbroken success. It is a Scotchman, and an opponent of Oliver, who has recorded, "We always reckon those eight years of the usurpation a time of great peace and prosperity." Far otherwise was it with Ireland. The conquest, begun by Oliver with ruthless cruelty, was completed by Ireton, Ludlow, and his other generals, with unflinching savagery. Famine, massacre, spoliation, transportation,

persecution, and private murder, exterminated the Irish landowners in the larger part of the island. Wholesale dispossessions, proscriptions, and transplantation, transferred the bulk of the soil to Protestant adventurers. At length Ireland had peace ; but it was the peace made by the destroyer, as of the Roman it was said, "They make a wilderness and call it peace." "No such doom," writes the historian of the English People, "had ever fallen on a nation in modern times as fell upon Ireland in its new settlement." And it was essentially the work of Oliver. For ten years, from 1649 to 1659, Ireland had no other rulers but Oliver, his two sons-in-law, his own son. In Scotland, religion, institutions, law, land, habits, and national sentiment were scrupulously respected. In Ireland, the religion, institutions, law, land, habits, and national sentiment of the Irish were trampled under the heel of the conqueror. Such is the dark side of Puritanism and of English ambition.

The same taint in a measure hangs over the war policy of Oliver in Europe, if we judge it by the standard of social morality and our modern desire for peace. In that age, and with such a creed, it would be asking too much to require such a standard of Puritans. Admitting its arrogant assertion of right and godliness, it was an unbroken and dazzling triumph. The history of England offers no such picture to national pride as when the kings and rulers of Europe courted, belauded, fawned on the farmer of Huntingdon. The record of English arms has no more brilliant page than that of Blake at Teneriffe, of Lockhart at Dunkirk and Morgan at Ypres, when the Ironsides stormed unbreached forts and annihilated Spanish battalions, to the amazement of

Turenne, Condé, and Don John. Never has a ruler of England been formally addressed by kings in such Oriental terms as "the most invincible of sovereigns," "the greatest and happiest of princes." "It was hard to discover," wrote Clarendon, "which feared him most, France, Spain, or the Low Countries;" "There is nothing he could have demanded that either of them would have denied him." But, as in his own age, so perhaps still, the memory of Cromwell has impressed itself on the imagination of foreigners more deeply than on that of his countrymen. It is an eminent statesman and a great historian of another country who has written: "He is, perhaps, the only example which history affords of one man having governed the most opposite events, and proved sufficient for the most various destinies." It is a philosopher of another country who has said: "Cromwell, with his lofty character, is the most enlightened statesman who ever adorned the Protestant world."

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAST DAYS: SICKNESS AND DEATH

A.D. 1658. ÆTAT. 59

NEVER had the fortunes of the Cause stood firmer than in July 1658,—had but Oliver been destined to live out his threescore years and ten. At home rebellion and plots had been once more utterly stamped out; abroad the capture of Dunkirk had raised the glory of England to its highest point; a new Parliament was preparing, it was hoped with happier prospects. But the wings of the Angel of Death already were hovering over the house of Oliver.

His youngest daughter Frances, a bride of three months, was made a widow in February, by the death of young Rich, grandson and heir to the Earl of Warwick. The old Earl, the staunchest friend of the Protector amongst the peers, followed his grandson in April. Next, in July, the Protector's favourite daughter, Elizabeth Claypole, lay dying at Hampton Court. She too had recently lost her youngest boy, Oliver. Now she was in great extremity of bodily pain, with frequent and violent convulsion fits. Through nearly all July the broken-hearted father hung over her bedside, unable

to attend to any public business whatever. On 6th of August she was dead.

Oliver himself had sickened during her last days; and, though he came to London on the 10th, when she was buried in Henry VII.'s chapel, he returned to Hampton Court very ill. That day, it seems, in his bedchamber, he called for his Bible, and desired a godly person to read to him Philippians iv. 11, 12, 13; and repeating again and again the words: "*I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.*" he said thus to himself, "He that was Paul's Christ is my Christ too!" For some days longer he continued to transact business, and even took the air. There George Fox saw him for the last time. "As he rode at the head of his life-guard, I saw and felt a waft of death go forth against him; and, when I came to him, he looked like a dead man."

The next day he was very ill with ague, which became "a bastard tertian," hot and cold shivering fits recurring at intervals. Between the attacks he did some business, and was able to be carried in a coach to Whitehall on the 24th. But "his time was come, and neither prayers nor tears could prevail with God to lengthen out his life." He saw Fairfax for the last time, and steadily refused his petition for the release of Fairfax's son in law, Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. He still in the intervals of the fever fits gave some orders, mitigated Buckingham's captivity, and made some appointments. But the ague became a "double tertian," fits recurring within the same day. "Truly the hot fit hath been very long and terrible," wrote Thurloe, "insomuch that the doctors fear he will scarce get

through it." The family were all around him, except Henry, who was in Ireland. Hope was now given up; consternation fell on the household and the whole Puritan party; all through Sunday the churches resounded with prayers.

His faithful attendant has preserved a record of his last hours. These are some of his last words—but we must remember that, in such a malady, coherence is out of the question, even if deathbed speeches are ever exactly recorded. He spoke continually of the Covenants; the preachers, chaplains, and many others being constantly about him, or in the room adjoining. When his children and wife stood weeping round him, he said: "Love not this world. I say unto you, it is not good that you should love this world!" He prayed: "Lord, Thou knowest, if I do desire to live, it is to show forth Thy praise and declare Thy works!" Once he was heard saying, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God." Again: "I think I am the poorest wretch that lives; but I love God; or rather, am beloved of God."

On Monday, 30th August, there raged a terrific storm, unroofing houses, uprooting trees, dealing desolation at sea. Superstition, party malice, made the most of this historic storm. The dying man was now conscious only partially and at intervals. They urged him to name his successor. The sealed paper with Richard's name in it could not be found. Was it Richard? No man now knows. Twice the sinking ruler is believed to have given some indistinct assent. These are the words which passed current as his last Prayer:—

“Lord, though I am a miserable and wretched creature, I am in covenant with Thee through grace. And I may, I will, come to Thee, for Thy people. Thou hast made me, though very unworthy, a mean instrument to do them some good, and Thee service; and many of them have set too high a value upon me, though others wish and would be glad of my death; Lord, however Thou do dispose of me, continue and go on to do good for them. Give them consistency of judgment, one heart and mutual love; and go on to deliver them, and with the work of reformation; and make the Name of Christ glorious in the world. Teach these who look too much on Thy instruments, to depend more upon Thyself. Pardon such as desire to trample upon the dust of a poor worm, for they are Thy people too. And pardon the folly of this short Prayer:—even for Jesus Christ’s sake. And give us a good night, if it be Thy pleasure. Amen.”

These sentences are not given as the precise words he uttered, and, like all last prayers, they are manifestly arranged. Yet some such words he probably repeated after Dr. Owen, or Dr. Goodwin, at his side. They certainly present to us the spirit of his last thoughts.

For two or three days more, life still flickered; and we have a few broken sentences recorded, it seems quite literally, by his faithful attendant:—

“Truly God is good; indeed He is; He will not——” Then his speech failed him, but as I apprehended, it was, “He will not leave me.” This saying “God is good,” he frequently used all along; and would speak it with much cheerfulness, and fervour of spirit, in the midst of his pains. Again he said: “I would be willing to live to be further serviceable to God and His People; but my work is done. Yet God will be with His People.”

He was very restless most part of the night, speaking often to himself. And there being something to drink offered him, he was desired to take the same, and endeavour to sleep. Unto which he answered: “It is not my design to drink or

sleep ; but my design is, to make what haste I can to be gone."

Towards morning he used some expressions of consolation and peace, and some of deep humility and self-abasement. The day that dawned was his day of triumph, the 3d of September, the day of Dunbar and of Worcester. He was then speechless, and remained all day in a stupor ; prayer, consternation, and grief, all around him. Between three and four in the afternoon the watchers by his bedside heard a deep sigh. Oliver was dead.

APPENDIX D

THE vast issues which hung on the Protector's life and the unsolved question if he named a successor give more than usual interest to the character of his last illness. My friend, Dr. W. Howship Dickinson, of St. George's Hospital, has been so kind as to examine the recorded facts, and to send me a brief report. His opinion is, and Sir George Paget, Regius Professor of Physic at Cambridge, agrees, that Oliver died essentially of ague, or some form of malarial fever, without any advanced organic disease such as would cause death ; but of ague coming upon a man weakened by toil, anxiety, and gout. It is probable that, if Peruvian Bark, which was then more or less in use in England, had been administered in time, the Protector's life might have been extended. But there is reason to think that this remedy, about the time of Oliver's last illness, had fallen into temporary disrepute, in consequence of a death believed to have been caused by it. It might have subdued the ague ; and there is no evidence of any other sufficient cause of death. In such a malady it is unlikely that, after 31st of August, any prolonged mental effort could have been made. One of his physicians told Sir P. Warwick that the Protector was "never in any such condition as distinctly to know what he did." And Dr. Bates

declares that, when he is supposed to have nominated Richard, he was "in a drowsy fit."

His funeral was the most magnificent ever known in England. It was exactly imitated from that of Philip II., who had died on the same day, sixty years before, and is said to have cost in our values £150,000. The legends which have gathered round the remains of Oliver are almost as strange as those which are told of Alexander, Charlemagne, or Barbarossa. The ordinary histories record that the Protector's body was embalmed, buried in Henry VII.'s chapel, disinterred at the Restoration, hung at Tyburn, decapitated, and the head set up over the gate of Westminster Hall. It has been continually asserted (1) that his body was never buried in Westminster Abbey at all; (2) that it was buried on the field of Naseby; (3) that it was secretly sunk in the Thames; (4) that when disinterred at the Restoration, it was recovered by the family; (5) that, after hanging at Tyburn, it was buried near the foundations of No. 1 Connaught Place; (6) that it was obtained by Lady Fauconberg, and walled up in masonry at Newburgh in Yorkshire, which is still in the possession of Sir G. Wombwell, who inherits it from the Fauconberg family. The truth it is now perhaps impossible to recover. The whole funeral ceremony was avowedly performed with an "effigy." The more probable account would be, that the body was really buried in the Abbey, and was disinterred at the Restoration, and the head was actually exposed for many years over Westminster Hall. It is far from improbable that Lord Fauconberg had influence enough to secure the remains, and privately immured them in the walls of the mansion, where so many relics of Oliver remain.

If this be so, the quickened conscience of the nation might yet reverse a deed which dishonours our Monarchy and stains our annals; and the bones of the greatest ruler this country ever had might again be laid to rest beside the heroes and statesmen of England.





